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ABSTRACT

This manual supplies the written materials that accompany or supplement a video program on developing and implementing peer coaching among inservice teachers. The video program consists of two tapes, the first, or main program tape, explaining the process and giving examples, and the second supplementing the first by providing an in-depth look at the conferences highlighted in tape 1 and also showing brief segments of classroom teaching. In this manual, case studies are presented of three school districts that implemented peer coaching in their teaching staffs. A case study discussion guide is also provided. The following related articles are included: (1) "Instructional Growth through Peer Coaching" (Petra Munroe, Jack Elliott); (2) "Team Coaching: Staff Development Side by Side" (Gloria Neubert, Elizabeth Bratton); (3) "Before and After Peer Coaching" (Georgea Mohlman Sparks, Shelley Bruder); (4) "Peer Coaching: One District's Experience in Using Teachers as Staff Developers" (Diana Leggett, Sharon Hoyle); (5) "Professional Growth and Support through Peer Coaching" (Patricia Raney, Pam Robbins); (6) "Teachers Coaching Teachers" (Beverly Showers); (7) "Coaching: A Powerful Strategy for Improving Staff Development and Inservice Education" (Mid-continent Regional Educational Laboratory); (8) "Research Brief: Coaching Teachers" (Far West Laboratory); and (9) "Synthesis of Research on Staff Development for Effective Teaching" (Georgia Mohlman Sparks). (JD)

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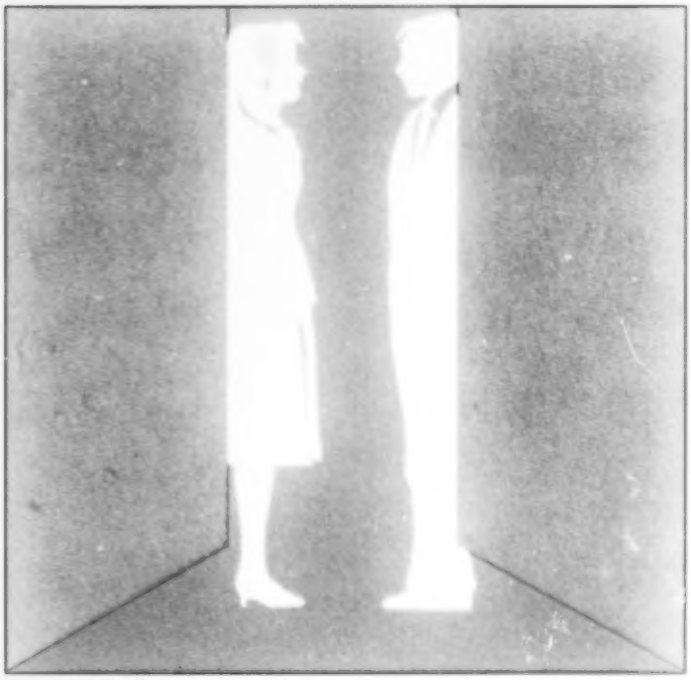
Facilitator's Manual



OPENING DOORS

An Introduction to PEER COACHING

Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

ED 323 671

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OPENING DOORS

An Introduction to PEER COACHING

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Introduction

Overview

There is in education today a new emphasis on collegiality and collaboration, on teachers working together to refine their teaching skills, to solve common classroom problems, and to discover ways to improve student learning. Although there are numerous ways to reach this goal, perhaps the most powerful and exciting is through what has come to be known as peer coaching. As with many educational innovations, however, peer coaching is more complex than it appears at first glance. Implementation of a peer coaching program requires consideration of many factors; there is no single recipe for success.

Intended Audience

This video program is intended for use by principals, superintendents, central office personnel, school boards, staff development/school improvement committees, teachers, or any person interested in understanding and implementing peer coaching.

About the Program

The program provides an introduction to peer coaching and an overview of the issues surrounding it. It defines coaching, looks at potential benefits, introduces the various forms coaching can take, and discusses the environmental variables that need to be considered for successful implementation of a peer coaching program.

The supplemental tape is designed to provide an in-depth look at the conferences that were highlighted in the program. It contains edited preconferences, brief segments of classroom teaching, and edited postconferences illustrating the three major types of coaching. These are not meant to be perfect models of peer coaching, but rather examples of interactions that occur between teacher and coach.

In a workshop, the supplemental tape can be used to model various types of coaching (e.g., mirroring, collaborative, expert). It also can be used for analyzing various coaching and conferencing skills, such as paraphrasing, questioning, and trust building.

Role of the Facilitator

If these videotapes are used by a task force or committee whose goal is to implement a peer coaching program, we suggest using a facilitator to lead the discussion and activities following the viewing of the tape. The facilitator could be a staff development trainer, principal, central office administrator, or teacher. The major responsibilities of the facilitator would be to:

1. View the tape and become familiar with its contents.
2. Carefully read this facilitator's manual and the articles.
3. Generate questions for discussion and select activities to be used.
4. Arrange for the duplication of articles.
5. Arrange for subsequent follow-up meetings of the task force or committee.

Suggestions for Viewing

The first tape can be viewed in one sitting, but understanding of the topic may be increased by stopping the tape for discussion, ideally following any one of the three major topics addressed in the tape: the benefits of coaching, the three major types of coaching, or the factors to be considered in implementation.

Suggested Activities

Jigsaw Activity

Included in this manual are several articles on various aspects of peer coaching. If this video is being used by members of a committee or task force to begin a peer coaching program, they should all read and discuss these articles (or the ones that best fit their needs). An alternative for use during a committee meeting is the Jigsaw Activity.

Begin the jigsaw by creating "Home Groups" of three, four, or five participants, depending on the number of articles you select to read. Ask each group to generate a list of questions they may have about coaching. List the questions from each group on a chart or chalkboard, combining those that are similar. Suggest that many of their questions may be addressed in the jigsaw activity and that those not addressed can be the topic of further research or discussion later.

Next, ask the members in each group to number off one through three (or four, etc.). Explain that each person in the group is to read and take notes on one of the articles. Assign each member an article to read. The first five articles in this manual describe specific coaching programs; the other four discuss peer coaching in general terms. Select the articles you think will best fit the needs of your staff or group. The jigsaw activity works most effectively when all articles are approximately the same length.

Appoint a timekeeper and allot approximately 20 minutes for everyone to read their articles and highlight key points. When the 20 minutes are up, form the participants into new "Expert Groups" of persons who have read the same article. (All the 1's form an Expert Group, the 2's another, etc.) The purpose of these groups is to give participants an opportunity to discuss their articles and determine the key points that need to be shared with others who have not read the material.

Again, assign timekeepers to limit the discussions of the Expert Groups to about 15 minutes. Then ask participants to return to their "Home Groups" and take from five to seven minutes to share the essential information from their articles with other group members.

At the conclusion of the jigsaw activity, ask each group to turn to the questions generated earlier and discuss the answers they discovered through their reading. They should then select a spokesperson to report their findings to the whole group.

In closing this activity, you may wish to ask group members to discuss the jigsaw process. Explain that this activity has a cooperative goal structure similar to the cooperative aspects of peer coaching: There is both *individual accountability* for learning the information in each article and *group interdependence*, since each member receives information from others about the articles they have read.

Case Study Analysis

Also included in this manual are case studies from three school districts that have implemented peer coaching programs. They are actual case histories and do not necessarily represent exemplary practices. The peer coaching program in each of these districts, however, has been deemed successful by those participating, so an analysis of their strategies should prove helpful. [*Note:* Any of the first five articles in the appendix could also be used for this activity, as they contain descriptions of how coaching programs have been implemented.]

To prepare for analyzing the case studies, you may want to stop the videotape just after the section on types of coaching mod-

els and tell viewers that the next section of the tape deals with the factors critical to successful implementation of peer coaching programs. Ask them to watch for (and perhaps take notes on) the factors discussed. Also inform them that they will have an opportunity to read actual case studies and will be asked to determine how each district addressed these issues.

Show the remainder of the tape. With the help of the participants, list the critical factors discussed on a chart or chalkboard. The three general categories of factors discussed on the tape are (1) Support, (2) Training, and (3) Trust. Next, have participants read the case studies and look for examples of how each district addressed these issues. A Case Study Analysis and Discussion Guide is included in this manual, along with a sample case study analysis. Each of the three case studies can be assigned to a group.

Conclude this activity with a discussion of how each district addresses the issues of support, training, and trust. It is important to note that there is no "correct" analysis. What you want participants to see is that even though these districts implemented peer coaching in very diverse ways, all were successful because they paid careful attention to the critical factors of support, training, and trust.

Reading Memorial High School's Peer Coaching Program: A Case Study

Patrick A. Schettini, Jr.

Why Peer Coaching?

In the broadest definition, peer coaching is simply two teachers observing each other's classes with the objective of helping each other fine-tune their abilities as teachers.

We at Reading Memorial High School view peer coaching as a collegial process that can improve classroom instruction and promote teacher empowerment. We believe the most successful schools are those where teachers do not work in isolation, but rather have opportunities to work with peers on educational and instructional issues that directly affect them and their students. Peer coaching is one of these opportunities.

Moreover, peer coaching transcends the faculty meetings and committee work that schools use to elicit teacher input and places teachers working together in the classroom with real students. It gives teachers "another set of eyes" in their classrooms.

Who Is Involved in Peer Coaching?

Reading Memorial High School is a suburban high school of 1,100 students and 80 teachers just 20 miles north of Boston. Reading Memorial High School has a reputation as a progressive school with traditional roots. We never jump on the bandwagons, but we consistently seek ways to better educate students. In addition, professional growth is very important to the faculty and administration.

The people who played a major role in the creation of Reading Memorial High School's peer coaching program are Mark Piechota, the principal; Bob Quinn and myself, assistant principals and co-coordinators of the program; Donna Pappalardo, Camille Visconti, Judy Donovan, and Ruthann Budrewicz (the teachers in the pilot program); and 13 other outstanding teachers who participated in the debut year of our peer coaching program.

How Did We Get Started?

The school year was 1987–88. I was involved in a state-sponsored institute on teacher supervision and evaluation. The topics of the institute included aspects of school culture, methods of teacher supervision and evaluation, and techniques of classroom data collection. My immediate objective was to use as much of the information and as many of the skills as I could in my role as assistant principal. I recruited two mathematics teachers, Donna and Camille, and two science teachers, Ruthann and Judy, to help me meet my objectives. These four good friends and exemplary teachers were not merely the subjects of my experiment; they proved to be the catalyst for the peer coaching program.

One of the most intriguing methods of supervision that we learned about is an objective, nonjudgmental, self-analytical process of coaching that increases the thinking

the teacher does about the lesson. The observer is not put in the role of evaluator. In fact, one of the rules is that the observer cannot give an opinion, but can only question and probe the teacher about the lesson and collect the data that the teacher requested about the lesson or class.

Initially, I thought this process could never work. If the observer does not give an opinion or suggestion, what is the sense of the observation? But then it clicked. Remember that student who gave you the wrong answer when you called on him in class? When you probed him long enough he came up with the correct answer. You didn't give him your opinion about why he didn't know the answer (i.e., "If you had paid attention, you would have known the answer!"); you questioned him so that he came up with the answer himself.

This method of coaching is very similar. The teacher and coach have a preconference prior to the lesson. The coach questions the teacher about the objective of the lesson, what the students will be doing, what concerns the teacher may have about the lesson, and what the teacher would like the coach to do when he is observing. During the observation, the coach collects the data that the teacher requested. For instance, the teacher may want to analyze her questioning, so she may ask the coach to collect all the questions she asks and the student responses. In the postconference the coach asks the teacher how she thought the lesson went and what she might change or do again. The coach also gives the teacher the raw data he collected so the teacher can make an analysis. Clearly the center and beneficiary of this process is the teacher. The coach's job is to maximize the benefits.

I explained this process to the four teachers, emphasizing that I would not be giving my opinion on the lesson, but rather would be asking questions to help the teachers themselves analyze the lesson. They were game to try it. I arranged times to observe each teacher. The results were amazing. The teachers felt that the process was very professional and allowed them to be self-analytical. They thought they got much more useful information from the thorough questioning and specific data collections than they would have gotten if I had just recorded a script-tape of the lesson and commented on it. They were able to see themselves through me. I was "another set of eyes" for them in their classroom.

I practiced this with each teacher throughout the year, fine-tuning my skills as a nonjudgmental coach with each observation. Then came the revelation. What if Judy and Ruthann coached together? What if Donna and Camille coached together? They agreed to try it. We got substitute teachers to cover their classes so that they would have time to conference. They were off! Donna, Camille, Judy, and Ruthann were peer coaching.

How Could Reading Memorial High School Institute Peer Coaching?

Were would we go from here? Could Reading Memorial High School benefit from a peer coaching program? How could it be used?

I had been discussing the progress of my leadership institute involvement with Bob Quinn and Mark Piechota. Bob became so interested that he enrolled in the same leadership institute. Mark, meanwhile, was planning an instructional strategies course that teachers could take part in next year. He and several teachers had decided to have Richard Strong, of Hanson, Silver and Strong, come to Reading to conduct the course. At the same time, the social studies teachers were planning a new World Studies course to be taught to all sophomores next year, and the English teachers were constructing a new American Literature course for those same sophomores. Peer coaching would complement all of these endeavors.

Bob and I sent letters to all the teachers explaining what peer coaching is and how it could benefit them. We spent the better part of the spring advertising this concept, spreading the word. Seventeen teachers volunteered to participate in the program.

What Kind of Training Did the Teachers Need?

What training do teachers need for peer coaching? How would the teachers get this training? Who would provide it?

The answers were simple. Bob and I planned a two-day workshop for the end of the summer, just one week before school started. We would be presenters. We would present the same model that I had been using with Donna, Camille, Judy, and Ruthann. We would also present various techniques of classroom data collection. We included a presentation of personality/learning styles and had participants find out their own particular style and share the information with their coaching partner. This was extremely helpful in allowing partners to appreciate the differences in their styles.

The coaches also had the opportunity to practice the process and discuss it with us or with each other. After the workshop, the teachers felt prepared to begin peer coaching.

What Follow-up Was Needed?

Teachers needed time for conferences and observation. Substitute teachers, department chairmen, or Bob and I covered classes to provide this time. Unless teachers have time for conferences and observation, peer coaching cannot take place.

In addition, we planned two meetings during the year for the group to discuss the progress of the program. The meetings allowed teams to explain how they adapted the model and process to best suit their individual needs. We also spent time discussing other topics, such as active listening and body language.

How Do We Keep the Program Going?

Our goal after the first year was to invigorate and nourish the program. We planned additional workshops for new teachers and continued the word of mouth.

Thinking of Starting a Peer Coaching Program?

If you are contemplating a peer coaching program for your school, here are some thoughts to keep in mind. You can certainly glean from this article that we at Reading Memorial High School believe that peer coaching is a useful tool for teachers to have at their disposal. It can promote teacher empowerment, decrease teacher isolation, provide teachers with a means to acquire useful classroom data, and assist teachers in fine-tuning skills. Peer coaching, however, should not be viewed as a panacea. It is an activity that can be devastating to a school if it is forced upon it. It is a process that can only prosper in a climate of trust and risk-taking.

Trust. A sense of trust must permeate the entire school. Coaches must feel comfortable that the administration is not looking over their shoulder to use this process for evaluation. Coaches must trust each other to maintain confidentiality, to be honest, and above all else, to be professional.

Risk-taking. There must be a sense that it is OK to try something new—attempt a new teaching strategy, modify the curriculum to better accommodate students, or institute a new classroom management strategy. Peer coaching in and of itself is an example of risk taking. What can be more risky or threatening than observing your best friend's algebra class and your friend observing your U.S. history class?

Peer coaching model. Training in the process of peer coaching must be provided for teachers in the program. Although there are different peer coaching models, most share the same process of a pre-observation conference, classroom observation with data collection, and post-observation conference. Coaches must be trained in techniques of conferencing and classroom data collection.

Administrative support. For peer coaching to firmly take hold in a school, the coaches must be trained in a model of peer coaching and receive strong support from their administration. The administration must provide its teachers with training and time during the school day for conferences and in-class observation of one another.

Peer coaching complements and supports existing endeavors. Peer coaching by itself is nowhere near as powerful as it is when it parallels other instructional and or curriculum projects. Peers can observe one another trying new strategies or teaching a lesson in a new course. This is where peer coaching acts as a strong adhesive, bonding all that goes on in a school.

The Use of Peer Coaching in the Winchester Public Schools: A Case Study

E.P. Ned Browning

When you make a commitment to a divisionwide staff development program, you want to be sure it goes right. The nay-sayers always stand ready to herald a flop and help you put another training program skeleton in the closet. It was with these thoughts in mind that I speculated on instituting a training program, Elements of Effective Teaching (EET), for all of our division's instructional staff—regular classroom teachers, resource personnel, administrators, and supervisory staff members. Based on Madeline Hunter's instructional model, EET would form a foundational staff development program. It would help establish a common language to use in our dialogues on instruction and would be a springboard for other staff development programs.

The division's instructional personnel were divided into six training groups, each containing 30 to 35 persons. In an effort to ensure success, it was decided that the first training group would include the superintendent, all central office supervisory staff, all principals and assistant principals, and selected teachers from each school. The teachers we wanted to include were those who were already respected for their teaching skills, were secure and confident of their role in the classroom, and were perceived as leaders among the entire teaching staff. We knew that if they were positive about the training, they would "sell" it to the other teachers.

The format for the training was laid out. Ten days spread over a year and a half were scheduled for training workshops. The bulk of the days were scheduled in the summer and teachers were paid for their attendance. A consultant/trainer experienced in the Hunter training method was contracted.

This was the most widespread and long-range training program we had ever undertaken. We were looking for commitment and we needed to guarantee success. What was the key? Through our consultant trainer we got the answer—peer coaching.

The consultant shared the research of Bruce Joyce and Beverly Showers with our first training group and made clear the benefits of including coaching in our training. When coaching is added to staff development activities, implementation of the skills learned in the workshop setting is practically guaranteed. Without coaching, training can go "in one ear and out the other."

In our EET program, two days were allotted to training in peer coaching. Following the training, the full group broke into school groups and these groups discussed ideas for organizing and implementing coaching in their schools. To facilitate the mechanics of implementation, the consultant told them that substitute teacher time could be provided on a regular basis if they thought it would help free them to schedule coaching activities. This option has been used infrequently; peer coaching is such a valued activity that teachers make time by using "free" periods and helping one another with classroom coverage when necessary.

Peer coaching received an initial boost when the superintendent and several of the

building administrators in the first group participated in peer coaching with their teachers. This was evidence of commitment from the "top" and it was a hallmark of instructional leadership.

From the start we established some important guidelines for peer coaching. Teachers were to pair together for coaching only when both had received the same degree of training in EET. Teachers in later EET workshops were to be given the opportunity to observe teachers from an earlier training group before they started peer coaching to help alleviate any apprehension that might develop. This transitional step has proved to be very helpful. Finally, teachers were to be allowed to choose their peer coaching partners. We wanted to ensure comfort in the process and not attempt to force individuals into pairings. We have also encouraged a change of partners from time to time.

EET lends itself beautifully to peer coaching. Through training in the various elements, a common language is developed. Now when teachers discuss instruction with one another or with an administrator, they speak in terms with which all are familiar. The peer coaching engagement is obviously enhanced by this common language.

Peer coaching is used throughout the entire period of training for each group and continues for at least one year after training is completed. To further encourage an emphasis on peer coaching, we approached our school board with a request to waive the formal performance evaluation procedures for all teachers who were in training. Because peer coaching was being used in the training program, we were in effect already carrying out a strong instructional improvement program with these individuals.

It was guaranteed in the waiver that each teacher would participate in no fewer than six peer coaching episodes during the school year. In fact, the teachers' participation has far exceeded that number. The waiver has continued on an annual basis through the approval of the school board and is now an important component of the EET training.

The middle and high schools, with their much larger staffs, had more teachers involved in peer coaching than did the elementary schools. It became increasingly difficult for the building administrators to coordinate the program. Therefore, we selected two teachers from the first training group to serve as a building coordinator for peer coaching at each of those schools. They are responsible for coordinating the schedule of peer coaching and for developing refresher sessions on various elements from the training program. This has been an unqualified success at both schools. Where peer coaching had flagged somewhat, building coordinators have been able to provide continuing support and be readily available to respond to teachers' questions and needs.

Beginning next year, each elementary school will have an administrative assistant appointed to assist the principal with select responsibilities. Chief among these responsibilities will be to serve as coordinator of the peer coaching activities.

We have found that peer coaching is probably the single most important element in the EET program. It not only provides reinforcement of the skills presented in the training program, but more important, it has strengthened the spirit of collegiality within our faculties. Teaching can be a lonely job, but peer coaching strips away that loneliness and brings teachers together in a shared professional growth endeavor.

We also have found that training has become more effective and there has been increased sharing of other types of instructional activities and strategies among the teachers. One comment made recently in a meeting of representatives from all school levels further shows the effect of peer coaching. When one member of the group said that the elementary schools differed from the secondary schools in that there was a

greater sense of family and sharing because of their smaller size, the high school representative spoke up and said, "Well, I might have agreed with that statement two years ago, but since we began our training in Elements of Effective Teaching and have used peer coaching, our faculty has grown together significantly and there is a lot more sharing going on between teachers."

Peer coaching is an essential ingredient for any staff development training program whose purpose is to introduce new teaching skills into teachers' classroom practice. It provides a nonevaluative way for professionals to collaborate in refining their teaching. I cannot imagine instituting a staff development program from now on that does not have an appropriate peer coaching component.

The Bristol Borough School District Peer Coaching Program: A Case Study

Mary Louise Gesualdi

The Bristol Borough School District is a suburban district 20 miles north of Philadelphia, Pa., comprising an elementary school (K–6) of 750 pupils and a junior/senior high school (7–12) of 690 pupils. The administrative staff is headed by the superintendent of schools. Each building has a principal and an assistant principal, with a combined professional staff of 82.

Peer Coaching Part I

The school district's initial involvement with peer coaching began with a request from our local Intermediate Unit to the district superintendent, M. James McCool, regarding an upcoming series of staff development training sessions presented by Pam Robbins. A team of volunteers including Elementary Assistant Principal Charles R. Long, high school physics/mathematics teacher Lawrence M. Ciavola, and myself (elementary reading coordinator) attended this series. At the last meeting in the series, the team formulated an action plan for implementing peer coaching. Our local action plan consisted of:

1. **Organizational structure**
   —teaching pairs
2. **Focus**
   —Essential Elements of Instruction (EEI)
   —Time on Task
   —Interaction Analysis
3. **Observation Tools**
   —mirroring instruments for time off task
   —checklist
   —script taping
   —interaction instrument
4. **Logistics**
   —substitute teacher covers class while coach observes peer
   —occasional use of prep time for peers to do pre- and post-observation conferencing
5. **Selection of Peer/Colleague Coach**
   —Gregorc
   —Style Delineator
   —Modality Preferences
   —Proximity of class location
   —Friendship/shared beliefs
   —Admiration
6. **Administrators' Roles**
   —assistant principal schedules substitute teacher for class coverage
   —budget priority
   —develop school board support—financial and psychological
7. **Assess Value of Peer Coaching**
   —group discussion with recommendations regarding improvements for the following school year
   —increased participation of staff members
8. **Request for Act 80 Half-Day Inservice Sessions Inter-School Training with Chuck, Mary, and Larry acting as resource people and trainers**

Charles Long, representing the team, presented our completed action plan to Superintendent McCool, who in turn went to the Board of Education for approval. We also made two introductory presentations during faculty meetings to both the elementary and secondary staff members.

The First Inservice

Interested volunteers were invited to attend our first training session held on February 25, 1988. We combined the training for elementary and secondary teachers in an attempt to break down the barriers between the faculties. At this initial session, 24 teachers joined our peer coaching team. We presented the selection tools in action plan item #5, emphasizing that trust is paramount to the success of any peer coaching relationship, and group members then used the tools to select a peer coach. Larry Ciavola and I discussed with the group the conferencing form we designed for the peer coaching process, using guidelines from our own training. Charles Long assured the group that total confidentiality would be maintained: peer observations would not be used for staff evaluation, nor would members have to reveal their choice of coach to the group.

After laying this foundation, we turned to the focus area of the session: Interaction Analysis. Larry and I modeled preconferencing, shared the results from lessons we observed using the Interaction Analysis tool, and modeled postconferencing. We encouraged group members to share their reactions to the process and discuss the rewards of observing a colleague in a different building and subject area.

Between this meeting and the next inservice session, the district provided a substitute teacher to allow each team an opportunity to practice using Interaction Analysis.

The Second Inservice

At the March 30 inservice, we discussed the results of our experiments with the methods we learned at the previous inservice. Charles Long led a jigsaw activity to review the research on Modality Preferences, and individual teams shared their successes and the problems they encountered in using the Interaction Analysis instrument. I then began the discussion of Time On Task, this session's focus area. A videotape from Research for Better Schools was used to model the mirroring instrument. Larry and I then shared our experience with this tool.

The district again hired substitute teachers so teams could practice using the time-on-task technique.

The Third Inservice

The May 25 inservice began with a discussion of our use of the instruments presented in the previous sessions. We then devoted the meeting to evaluating the entire peer coaching process and making recommendations for the upcoming school year. The group recommended:

- continued use of inservice and Act 80 half-days;
- continued use of task-oriented, well-defined training sessions;
- voluntary continuation and participation;
- that participants should not be held responsible for inservice activities that take place on the same day as peer coaching training sessions;
- a reduction in noninstructional duties to help alleviate the problem of finding qualified substitute teachers;
- visiting other school districts that have peer coaching programs;
- presenting a discussion of Learning Styles and Modality Preferences to the entire faculty;

- continued release time and resources for Mary Gesualdi and Larry Ciavola to continue training;
- that all participants receive certificates of participation.

Further Training

In the district's effort to expand its trainers group, one of our Chapter I reading specialists, Patricia Harkness; the chairperson of the Fine Arts Department, Mrs. Lois Heist; and an elementary teacher, Mrs. Carol Smith; joined Larry Ciavola and me in attending a series of Intermediate Unit workshops dealing with Essential Elements of Instruction. The secondary social studies teacher, Debbie Fine, and another of our Chapter I reading specialists, Kate Grow, participated in a summer workshop at the Intermediate Unit on Models of Teaching.

Planning for the New School Year

During the summer of 1988, the superintendent of schools met with the trainer's group to plan inservice workshops for the 1988-89 school year, using the recommendations above as a guide. We decided to use peer coaching as the umbrella under which all staff development would occur. The group brainstormed the concept of presenting each research-based staff development topic to the entire faculty for the first part of the Act 80 half-days.

The peer coaching group then met to determine observation instruments. One substitute teacher for each building was hired to allow teams four observations between inservice sessions.

Peer Coaching Part II

On the opening inservice day in September, Larry and I presented an overview of the peer coaching process, discussing the Gregorc Style Delineator and the Modality Preference checklist, along with appropriate research. We asked faculty members to sign up if they were interested in participating in peer coaching.

At the September 28 training session, the entire faculty reviewed Motivation Theory with David Archibald of the Bensalem School District. The peer coaching group of 31 teachers met with our three new trainers to recap the six variables of Motivation, using a jigsaw activity. Additional administrative support allowed for a Saturday morning workshop where new participants were trained in Interaction Analysis and Time On Task. Experienced members reviewed those instruments with two trainers. Both groups convened to learn about script taping and the Motivation observation tool.

Active Participation was the focus area of our next inservice on January 4, 1989. Jim Russell and Barbara Tantala of the Pennsbury School District engaged the entire faculty in this component of EEI. The peer coaching group continued the discussion by reviewing the variables of motivation. Team members then related their reactions to using the mirroring instrument.

The January 10 workshop concentrated on one model of Cooperative Learning. The district curriculum adviser in social studies, Debbie Fine, gave an overview of her Models of Teaching training, and Beth Bosold and Alex Sexton of the Bucks County Intermediate Unit presented models of STAD (Student Teams Achievement Divisions). Three of our trainers then led a discussion of the Active Participation tool. Debbie Fine concluded the session by discussing the Cooperative Learning coaching process and explaining group scoring for STAD.

The last inservice workshop for the school year was held on March 9. Debbie Fine returned to introduce the Concept Attainment model. As the peer coaching group adjourned to their meeting room, they participated in an activity designed to review the five elements of Cooperative Learning.

Using Learning Styles as criteria, the group then formed base groups for a simulation activity designed to have teachers experience working competitively, individually, and cooperatively. This activity led to a discussion of the observation tool for STAD. To conclude the session, Larry modeled a science lesson using Concept Attainment (CA) techniques, and the group observed the lesson using the CA instrument.

Peer Coaching and the Future

In May, our peer coaching group will meet with Bristol Township teachers from the George Washington Elementary School also involved in peer coaching. This meeting was arranged by the Intermediate Unit and the session will be conducted by Pam Robbins. The topic for discussion will be the Essential Coaching Skills of Observation and Conferencing. The Bristol Borough peer coaching group will be asked to evaluate the past year's activities and make recommendations for the upcoming school year. We expect peer coaching will continue to be part of our inservice training.

Case Study Discussion Guide

Support

What evidence is there that the school/district provided both financial and psychological support for the peer coaching program? What did the support look like and how did it affect the coaching program?

Training

Did teachers receive training in the skills of coaching? How was this training structured? Does it appear that the training was adequate to allow teachers to be successful in their coaching efforts?

Trust

How did this school/district address the issue of trust? What was done to create a safe environment for peer coaching?

Sample Case Study Analysis of Reading Memorial High School

Support

What evidence is there that the school/district provided both financial and psychological support for the peer coaching program? What did the support look like and how did it affect the coaching program?

It appears that the two assistant principals played a critical role in the successful implementation of peer coaching at this school. They went through the training first, then modeled the process with teachers before asking them to become involved. Their enthusiasm and belief in coaching was expressed by their willingness to put themselves on the line in front of their teachers. They provided substitute teachers and covered classes themselves to allow teachers time to coach. They scheduled follow-up meetings to provide additional support and discuss progress.

Training

Did teachers receive training in the skills of coaching? How was this training structured? Does it appear that the training was adequate to allow teachers to be successful in their coaching efforts?

The assistant principals obviously received very effective training in the beginning, which allowed them to practice and internalize the skills they later taught to the teachers. The training they provided to the teachers included not only various techniques that could be used to collect data, but also information on personality and learning styles. The teachers were also given time to practice their new skills and discuss their progress with one another other. It appears that their training efforts were quite successful as word of the project spread and additional teachers became interested in and joined the program.

Trust

How did this school/district address the issue of trust? What was done to create a safe environment for peer coaching?

The assistant principal who started the program began by working with teachers with whom, it appears, he already had a high level of trust. Perhaps this is why they were later willing to try coaching with each other. When it came time to expand the program, letters were sent out carefully explaining the program and requesting volunteers to participate. It is probable that the positive experience of the first teachers, respect for the assistant principals, and the fact that the program had been kept separate from evaluation led others to feel that this program was not only beneficial but nonthreatening.

Instructional Growth Through Peer Coaching

What are the features of an effective peer coaching program? A peer coaching program in one school is described and recommendations are provided for other districts considering establishing a similar program.

PETRA MUNRO
JACK ELLIOTT

Staff developers need to encourage teachers to apply effective teaching strategies in their classrooms. While classroom supervision and teacher inservice have been the traditional methods of improving teacher instruction, research conducted by Joyce and Showers (1980, 1981, 1982) suggests that these approaches are not necessarily effective in causing permanent change in teacher instruction because they do not provide regular feedback.

The peer coaching program at Forest View High School, Arlington Heights, Illinois, was designed to provide regular feedback to teachers to promote long-term teacher behavior changes which improve instruction. This article includes a description of the program, an evaluation of its effectiveness, and recommendations for other districts when implementing a peer coaching program.

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The Peer Coaching Program

Goals

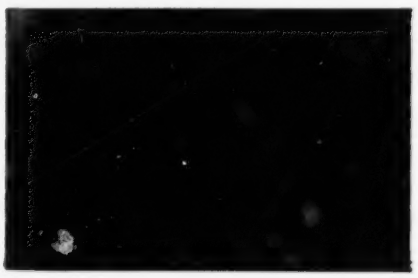
Peer coaching is a method of improving teaching effectiveness in which teachers work with one or more colleagues to achieve specific instructional goals through a process of regular observation and feedback. The peer coaching program, implemented at Forest View High School in 1985, enabled teachers to serve as their own staff developers.

There were several goals of the peer coaching program. First, the coaching program was aimed at increasing student learning through improved instruction. The program was designed not to remediate substandard teachers but, instead, to promote for all teachers the continued improvement of instruction.

Second, the program was designed to facilitate the exchange of instructional methods and materials. This sharing, in addition to creating a more positive collegial atmosphere and encouraging team planning was considered to be an important element in improving instructional effectiveness. The third goal was to provide a mechanism in which teachers could receive regular, positive feedback on their classroom performance. Peer coaching would provide affirmation of the good job most teachers were doing each day.

Fourth, the peer coaching program was designed to help teachers focus on the achievement of instructional goals that would improve student learning. The final goal was to breakdown the "privacy rule" which inhibited sharing of ideas and classroom experiences by keeping teachers isolated. It was believed that by observing colleagues, teachers would begin to re-evaluate their own teaching and become more comfortable with having peers in their classrooms.

From the beginning, it was necessary to divorce peer coaching from the contractual evaluation process. We emphasized that peer coaching was intended to promote shared responsibility for professional growth by establishing a collegial atmosphere to improve instruction and student learning.



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Program Development and Features

The peer coaching program in Forest View High School began in 1984 when, as a part of their self-evaluation, teachers were asked to observe or be observed by a colleague. In the spring of 1985, teachers were invited to participate in the peer coaching program beginning in August. Participants were informed this would entail participating in a 2-day effective teaching workshop. During the workshop, teachers were to assess their current strengths and weaknesses, review effective teaching practices, identify areas of potential professional growth, and develop observation and feedback skills. The result was the development of an action plan containing strategies to achieve in-

structional goals which would lead to improved student performance. Teachers were told that they would be working with a colleague of their choice throughout the year to observe one another regularly and to give non-evaluative feedback. Due to the time needed for observations and conferences with peers, participants were released from their hall-duty assignment for one semester.

Out of 133 staff members, 41 teachers chose to participate in the peer coaching program. In August, the participating teachers met with the program director for the first day of the 2-day workshop. The workshop had several goals: to provide an overview of the program's objectives, to present the research on effective teaching, to conduct teacher self-assessment, to introduce observation and feedback skills, and to have teachers begin writing an action plan which would describe their instructional improvement goals.

A 3-hour workshop followed at the end of September in which effective teaching skills were discussed by a guest speaker. Action plans were also completed and the first classroom observations made earlier this month were discussed by the peer coaching teams.

In the first weeks of October, the director met with each participant to discuss and refine their action plans and to assess the need for assistance with classroom observation and feedback. Throughout the school year, peer coaching teams were encouraged to make two observations per month and fill out monthly goal sheets which would help them focus on a part of their action plan. To establish some form of accountability and keep abreast of the program's progress, the program director met with the coaching teams every other month. The participants were also requested to take part in a mid-year and end-of-year program evaluation.

The peer coaching program at Forest View High School differed from some other coaching programs because teachers chose their coach or coaches from among their colleagues. In other coaching programs (Alfonso, 1977; Showers, 1985), one or more teachers were trained to perform coaching services and teachers involved in the peer coaching program would work with a trained peer coach rather than choosing a colleague. Another difference is that many coaching programs focus on particular instructional methods, whereas the Forest View program did not predetermine instructional processes to be observed by the coaching teams. The uniqueness of the Forest View peer coaching program was in its encouragement of teachers to provide support for their colleagues and to assume responsibility for their professional growth.

Program Evaluation

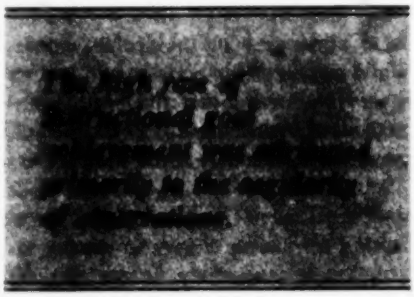
The peer coaching program was evaluated on the effects of peer coaching on the teachers' achievement of their instructional goals and on the acquisition of new skills or the fine tuning of existing skills by participating teachers. It was assumed, but not empirically tested in the evaluation, that effective teaching strategies applied in the classroom would increase student learning.

Throughout the year of implementation, data were collected through interviews with four participants in the peer coaching program, two questionnaires completed by all the participants, and interviews conducted with division chairpersons and with the principal.

Results

Because the success of the peer coaching program was directly related to the accomplishment of instructional goals, it was useful to examine the nature of these goals to see if they reflected areas identified in the effective teaching research reviewed by Brophy (1983) and Rosenshine (1983). Of the 38 action plans examined, there were 61 goals that related to the effective teaching research in the areas of student involvement, student success, teacher planning, classroom management, and teacher instruction. Only 10 goals in the action plans did not fit into the effective teaching research; these were goals identified by counselors who participated in the program.

A major concern of the evaluation was to determine whether the instructional goals identified by the teachers had been accomplished and what role peer coaching played in the achievement of these goals.



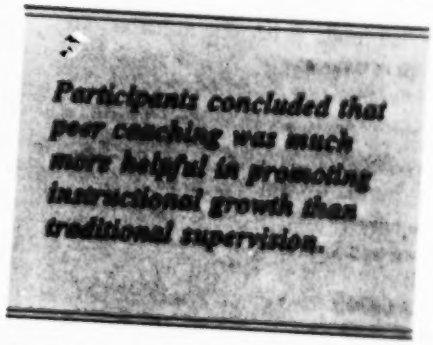
Data on goal achievement were collected through interviews and two evaluation questionnaires administered to the whole group. In the second questionnaire that was distributed at the end of the year, 97% of the participants said they had accomplished their instructional goals and 88% stated that peer coaching had made a significant difference in their instruction compared to previous years. For 94% of the participants, peer coaching had been more helpful in achieving instructional goals than direct classroom supervision.

The high rate of instructional goal achievement was attributed primarily to the regularity of observations. Peer coaching was reported to result in a higher "on

task'' behavior toward accomplishing goals because knowing that someone was coming in once or twice a month made teachers more conscientious about working on their goals. Goal achievement was also aided by the helpful feedback and suggestions provided by peer coaches. The process of observing also stimulated growth. Participants reported that observing another teacher automatically initiated a process of self-evaluation; observing a peer led teachers to reflect on their own classroom strategies and teaching methods.

Another important finding concerned the number of observations made by each coaching team. The average number of observations during the school year was 12.6, and the average number of conferences was 17. The lowest number of recorded observations was 7 and the highest was 38. Peer coaching participants were, on the average, observed six times as much as teachers who were not participating in the program.

Participants who were interviewed were asked to compare instructional goal achievement in peer coaching to achievement of goals under direct classroom supervision by supervisors. Those interviewed said that the frequency of observations and the high comfort level with peers, which allowed for open discussion of problems and concerns, lead to a much higher rate of instructional growth than when working with supervisors. Several


Participants concluded that peer coaching was much more helpful in promoting instructional growth than traditional supervision.

teachers noted that just one or two visits per year by the supervisor had no impact on their teaching. They saw the purpose of observations by supervisors as being evaluative, not as a method to improve instruction. Participants concluded that peer coaching was much more helpful in promoting instructional growth than traditional supervision.

In addition to increasing the number of observations and facilitating goal achievement, the peer coaching program had several other effects. In the mid-year evaluation, 93% of the participants reported that peer coaching provided more opportunities for sharing instructional methods. One coaching team in social studies began writing together course outcomes and tests. Another team from the math/science department began coordinating their advanced math and physics classes so concepts taught in math could be applied concurrently in physics.

Evaluation results also indicated that peer coaching helped break down isolation. One participant commented that by the end of the year ''my classroom had a revolving door, teachers were coming in and out of the classroom all the time and I wouldn't think twice about it.''

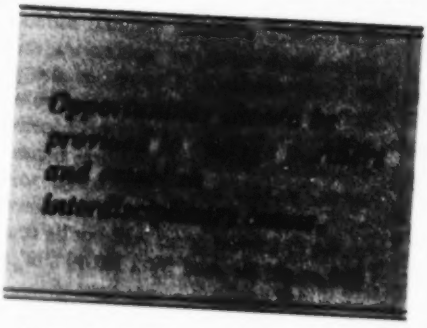
Participants expressed some initial anxiety about being observed by a peer, but that anxiety subsided after several observations. In fact, many participants found this process to be a wonderful growth experience and a source of regeneration because observing a peer served as a source of new ideas and energy. Participants also said it was reassuring to see that other teachers had the same type of ''problem students'' and were confronted with similar discipline problems. Through sharing common problems and frustrations, teachers felt less alone and acquired the support to face daily challenges with new enthusiasm.

Coaching also provided much needed positive reinforcement for teachers. One participant commented that ''peer coaching confirmed that what I was doing in the classroom was right.'' Much of the feedback that teachers received in their conferences was positive, thus providing reaffirmation that what they were doing was effective in promoting student learning. For most teachers accustomed to receiving only occasional feedback, the continual positive reinforcement received through peer coaching was a very rewarding aspect of the peer coaching program.

The evaluation of the peer coaching program also revealed some concerns. The most common concern was the shortage of time for observations and conferences. In the second semester, substitute teachers were provided once a month to allow for more observations. It was also suggested that the master schedule be arranged to prevent conflicting schedules of coaching partners.

Another concern voiced by participants was the need for increasing their repertoire of observation and feedback skills. During the August orientation meeting, different methods of observation had been presented, and teachers had been given the opportunity to practice scripting while observing a videotape of someone teaching. Participants recommended that, in addition, role playing of data collection and feedback techniques might have been helpful.

The evaluations also provided valuable recommendations for future programs. It was suggested that the program include the option of changing partners at mid-year, thus allowing for a greater variety of feedback. Another recommendation for future programs was to encourage cross-disciplinary coaching teams. Many teachers reported that understanding of the subject area was not essential to observation; in fact, teachers felt much could be learned by observing teachers in different subject areas where different methods are used.



In the final program evaluation, 82% of the participants said they would participate in a peer coaching program again. Most of the participants attributed the success of the program to the sense of accomplishment and growth they felt as a result of increased achievement of instructional goals. In addition, through sharing their expertise and developing respect for their colleagues, participants experienced a rekindling of professionalism.

Recommendations

Peer coaching provides a collegial atmosphere that promotes risk taking and

allows teachers to continually engage in the study of their craft. For schools implementing a peer coaching program, we offer the following recommendations:

- The purpose of peer coaching in staff development should be identified.
- Careful planning should be done. Support of administrative staff is necessary for a successful coaching program.
- Involvement in peer coaching should be voluntary. Participants should also be permitted to choose their partner(s).
- An incentive for participation should be initially provided.
- Instructional goals for improvement should be determined by teachers themselves.
- Participants should be trained in basic observation and feedback skills.
- A system of accountability for observations and conferences should be developed to provide structure for participants.
- Periodic sharing session should be arranged where all coaches can discuss experiences.
- Opportunities should be provided to change partners and establish interdisciplinary teams.
- The program facilitator should be responsible for coordinating peer coaching teams, setting up an accountability system, managing the schedule, and arranging for substitute teachers.

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GLORIA A. NEUBERT AND ELIZABETH C. BRATTON

Team Coaching: Staff Development Side by Side

A successful variation on peer coaching involves visiting resource teachers who, rather than observing classroom teachers, teach alongside them.

Teacher A: Today we are going to take the information from the webs we made yesterday and put it into a contrasting paragraph so someone can understand what you think the main differences are between an apple and an orange. There are ways to do that, and today we are going to help you with some techniques to write a well-organized, contrasting paragraph.

Teacher B: Did you find it easier to compare or contrast?

Student: Contrast.

Teacher B: Did you? Why?

Student: Because there are really big differences between an apple and an orange.

Teacher B: So you could more easily see the differences between the two. Okay. Did these webs help you to organize your thinking?

Student: Yes.

Teacher A: Why?

To the casual observer, this class of 22 students seems like any other third-grade classroom, except that it has two teachers instead of one. Both teachers stand at or near the front of the room, and both interact with the students. Both give directions, ask questions, and praise students.

What is occurring, however, in addition to instruction is staff development. Teacher A, the regular classroom teacher, is being coached in the teaching of writing by Teacher B, the language arts coordinator.

After reviewing the research on transfer of new methods into an active teaching repertoire, Bruce Joyce and Beverly Showers (1980) concluded that the most effective training included:

- study of the theory underlying the method,
- observation of the method as demonstrated by "experts,"
- practice of the method (in protected situations) with feedback, and
- coaching in the real teaching situation.

"Coaching" has been operationally defined as "the provision of on-site, personal support and technical assistance for teachers" (Baker and Showers 1984, p. 1). Recent implementations of coaching have often taken the form of *peer coaching*, that is, two classroom teachers attend the same inservice training, collaborate on lesson development, observe one another in their classrooms as a lesson is taught, and then offer constructive criticism about the lesson.

In our staff development work, teaching schedule conflicts have made peer coaching difficult, if not impossible. As one teacher reported, "We coached during planning and debriefing, and we *were* observing. It was wonderful! But then our schedules changed. Now we can't observe while the lesson is being taught—a real loss!"

We chose, therefore, to try an alternative form of coaching. We selected as coaches two school-based language arts coordinators (resource teachers) who had flexible schedules and could arrange to be in the teachers' classrooms for lesson execution. They had also had previous training in the teaching methods the teachers were to

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"A team coach must demonstrate success in the classroom, not as an observer but as a participating teacher."

learn, therefore, they were relative experts in the methodology.

Our coaching model differs from previous coaching models (e.g., Servatius and Young 1985, Showers 1985) in that the coach does not observe the teachers, but *team teaches* the lesson with them. We call our model "team coaching" because it resembles team teaching. That is, the coach and the teacher together plan, execute, and evaluate the lessons.

Our purpose in implementing this two-year team coaching model was to evaluate its success and to determine what characteristics make a team coach effective.

Background

Our staff development program began in August 1984 with a three-day inservice course in the teaching of writing conducted by the Maryland Writing Project. Twenty teachers from the Calverton School in Maryland, representing all areas of the curriculum and grades K-12, learned new approaches to the teaching of writing, observed teacher-consultants model strategies for teaching writing, developed their own lessons, and received feedback on their lesson plans. The two language arts coordinators also attended the sessions.

Coaching began at the start of the 1984 school year. The team coaches visited each classroom approximately twice a week for at least three months, or at most, for an entire school year. Together the team coach and the teacher planned, taught, and evaluated the lesson.

For two years we collected qualitative and quantitative data from coaches, teachers, students, and observers.

Quantitative data. After each year of coaching, teachers completed a questionnaire based on Joyce and Showers' (1982) five functions of a coach. Teachers rated their coach on each of the five functions using a 1 (low) to 5 (high) scale. Table 1 shows the questions, the function related to the question, and the average of the responses. It is notable that 12 of the 20 teachers rated all questions a 5 and that the averages for all five coaching functions were 4.6 and above.

Qualitative data. To evaluate the project, we videotaped, audiotaped, and observed the team coaching model in action. We interviewed teachers individually and in groups, studied the

Table 1
Teachers Rate Their Coaches

Question	Coaching Function (Joyce and Showers 1982)	Average (1 (low) to 5 (high) scale
1. How successful has the coaching been in providing for professional companionship (sharing with your coach, discussing problems and successes)?	Provision of companionship	5
2. How helpful has the technical feedback from your coach been on your lesson plans?	Giving of technical feedback	4.8
3. How helpful has the technical feedback from your coach been on in-class visits?		
4. To what extent do you feel you have integrated the process approach to writing as a standard part of your teaching repertoire?	Analysis of application (extending executive control)	4.6
5. To what extent has your partnership with your coach helped to adapt the writing process to your own particular situation?	Adaptation to the students	4.8
6. How much assistance have you gotten from your coach in helping you to feel good about yourself as you have tried new strategies?	Personal facilitation	5

Teacher and coach are partners in lesson execution, whether at the board or the desk or on the floor.

teacher-coach dialogue journals and examined teachers' comments on the questionnaire. We interviewed students as well.

Analysis of our data revealed five characteristics of the coaches that promote an effective team-coaching partnership. Quotes from teachers, students, and coaches illustrate their interpretations of each characteristic.

1. *Knowledge.* A team coach needs to know more than the classroom teacher about the method being learned; however, the coach does not need to know everything.

Teacher. I don't think the inservice would have been as beneficial as it had we not had a coach. A coach is an expert, our connection. She gives us the information we need to take us from the inservice to the classroom.

Student. The coach doesn't know everything, but she does review ideas and shares her thoughts with our teacher. I like the old saying, "Two heads are better than one."

Coach. The more sophisticated the teachers become, the more difficult their questions become. A coach has to be able to keep ahead of their knowledge base or at least help them to perfect their own teaching styles.

2. *Credibility.* A team coach must demonstrate success in the classroom, not as an observer but as a participating teacher. When the coach works side by side with the teacher, the teacher realizes that the coach has usable ideas and can execute them in the classroom.

Teacher. When I am observed, I feel that I am on show and every little step I take is being watched. It bothers me. However, if my coach and I are teaching together, it doesn't bother me. When the person is actually in there, dealing with the *buts* on the one hand and the *thinks* on the other hand and says, "I see what you mean, this is exhausting. What are we going to do?"—then I think an hour in the classroom can be better than listening to the best person for two hours. Even the nonbelievers and doubters can't be skeptical if the coaches going to take the challenges right along with you.

Student. If the coach sat in the back of the room, it would look like Mrs. T. was being evaluated. The coach isn't contributing then; it just wouldn't do any good. Plus, Mrs. T. would be nervous, and she'd think the coach wasn't really helping her, so she wouldn't listen to the coach anyhow.

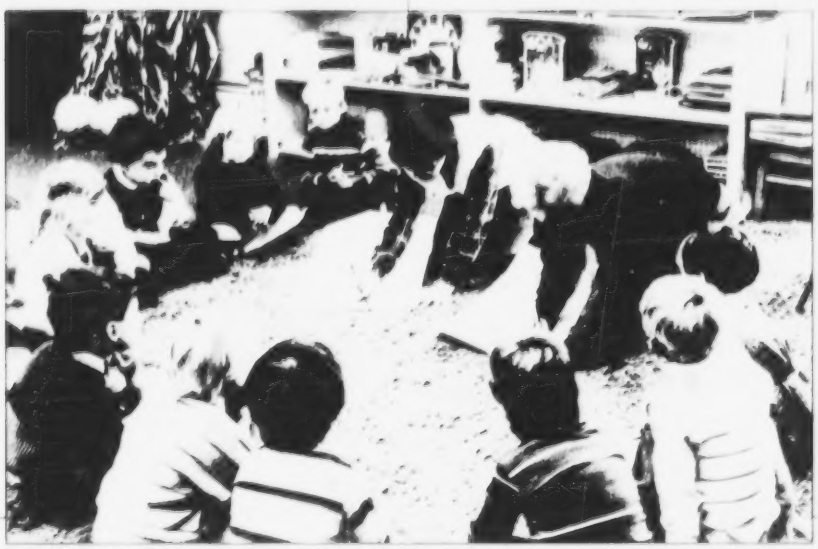
Coach. The teachers believe me because I go into the classroom and show that I can do what I'm asking them to do. If I didn't take the risks with them, I don't think they would let me back into their classrooms. I've had many teachers say to me, "I'm not afraid of making mistakes in front of you because I have seen you make mistakes and it's okay." In our school, I haven't had anybody ask me to just come and watch.

3. *Support.* A team coach must encourage the teacher's efforts and couch even constructive criticism with praise. Changing a behavior and implementing a new idea are difficult at best. A team coach has to be ready to praise the teacher's efforts, step by step.

Teacher. I guess the number one difference for me is moral support. We all need somebody to say we're doing it correctly and that we should be proud of ourselves.

Student. Not all teachers work together so well. Some teachers might fight and argue. The coach must be cooperative. If the coach and the teacher work together, the teacher will learn to trust the coach and start to listen.

Coach. I have to be supportive and give praise. All the journals have entries stating, "You've given me praise, you've given me confidence." Let's face it, most teachers are doing lots of good things and trying their best; they need to hear the good things first before they can start making changes.



"Analysis of our data revealed five characteristics of the coaches that promote an effective team coaching partnership. . . . knowledge, teaching credibility, support, facilitation, and availability."

4. *Facilitation*. A team coach is a "tenant" in another teacher's classroom, and it is essential that the teacher maintain ownership of the lesson, students, and classroom. The tenant is responsible for what occurs in the apartment, but the owner is the final authority. The coach is there to facilitate, not dictate.

Teacher: "The coach never takes the classroom away from me. The children don't treat me any differently. We're there together, and I think even an insecure teacher wouldn't feel threatened by her presence in the classroom. She is flexible and willing to have her ideas talked over and changed. We don't always go with her plan; we don't always go with mine. Sometimes she models a technique for me. I've watched and watched and find myself, when she is not there, running a writing workshop or whatever, using her exact words. But this is how I learned, and now it works for me."

Student: "When the coach is in my classroom, Mrs. J. is still the boss. The coach backs up and helps Mrs. J. We are all important in the classroom. The kids are the writers, so we're important. The coach and Mrs. J. are important because they make decisions about how to teach us better. They each have ideas, and we see them make decisions right in front of the class."

Coach: "From planning the lesson through discussing how the lesson went, the teacher must take ownership. I must respect the teacher's ideas, feelings, and reactions at all times. If I have an idea in class, I talk it over with the teacher and we come to a joint decision. Teachers want constructive criticism and help, but they need to have the authority to determine what occurs with their students."

5. *Availability*. A team coach must be accessible to the teacher for planning, team teaching, and conferencing. Because the coaches in this study were language arts coordinators, they had flexible schedules and were readily available to the teachers.

Teacher: "I don't have time to share ideas with other teachers and, even if I did, I'm not sure it would work quite as well. My coach takes time to plan with me, schedule herself into my classroom, and also debrief at the end of the lesson. We've gotten it down to 45 minutes on Tuesdays and Thursdays. It works, but I could easily use her every day."

Student: "The coach and Mrs. P. plan before class and sometimes during class. If they have another idea, they talk about it with each other and make a decision. Many times, when they get stuck making a decision, they ask us for our ideas and we help them out. After the lesson, they always take a few minutes to talk about the lesson and what to do next."

Coach: "Because I don't have a regularly assigned class, I'm able to schedule myself into classrooms on a regular basis. The teachers know when I'm coming, and they plan on me. Planning for the lesson and debriefing after the lesson are difficult, but we talk whenever we can. Sometimes we schedule meetings during planning periods, but more often we talk in the hallways during recess, and on the way to the car after school. I have to be available to share the unexpected thrills as well as the unavoidable defeats."

Conclusions and Considerations

The success of team coaching supports Joyce and Showers' (1982) view that people other than regular classroom teachers can be coaches. Thus, the role of another group of professionals, resource teachers, can be defined to include the important responsibility of coaching.

Our results also suggest several issues for consideration. First, our teachers are strongly opposed to having a coach who is not a peer, and not experiencing what they view as the realities of teaching, sitting in their room "observing" them, even for coaching purposes. This they perceive as evaluation, not coaching. Thus a nonclassroom-teacher coach would be well advised not to observe but to team teach.

Second, teachers, coaches, and students emphasize the importance of support and facilitation during coaching. This advice applies to all coaches—peer or team.

Third, teachers and coaches stress that the coach should be more knowledgeable than the teacher about the method being learned. This point should cause us to look carefully at peer coaching models in which two teachers who are in the skill acquisition stage are expected to coach one another.

Fourth, the team coaching model might be appropriately transferred to the preservice education program for student teaching experiences. Team coaching might be an appropriate scaffolding phase between the time student teachers observe classroom teachers (the coaches) and the time the student teachers solo teach.

Coaching has been shown to be a necessary ingredient for the most effective teacher training. This team coaching model—teacher and coach planning, executing, and evaluating side by side—is a realistic way to bring coaching into the schools. □

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Georgea Mohlman Sparks and Shelley Bruder

Before and After Peer Coaching

School-based peer coaching in two Ann Arbor schools has improved collegiality and encouraged teachers to try new practices.

Ann Arbor Public School teachers Verdell Mullice, left, and Lynn Nappier, right, share techniques for student motivation and participation

In summer 1985 the Ann Arbor, Michigan, Public Schools (AAPS) appointed a staff development consultant—Shelley Bruder—to develop a peer coaching program in two elementary schools.[1] At this time AAPS also hired an evaluator—Georgea Sparks—to study the effects of peer coaching when implemented by all teachers in the two schools. The study focused on whether peer coaching would improve collegiality in the schools, encourage experimentation with new practices, and enhance teaching effectiveness. The study also examined teachers' reactions to peer coaching and the benefits of the process.

In August the district presented the project requirements at principal meetings. After consulting with their staffs, two principals volunteered—School A to begin in the fall and School B to start in the winter. Both principals were proponents of effective teaching and peer coaching, and the teachers of both schools had gone through at least 10 hours of training in research-based effective teaching practices (Hunter 1976, Rosenshine and Stevens 1986). School A had been involved in a two-year school im-

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provement project that emphasized effective teaching.

The two schools approached the Peer Coaching Project from different perspectives. School A was committed to peer coaching before the project was proposed to them. The school improvement planning team and the principal had proposed the idea to the staff the prior spring, and all had been enthusiastic.

In contrast, School B's principal was the main proponent of peer coaching in that school. Since collaborative decision-making was not an established norm in School B, many teachers were doubtful and had rejected the proposal in the fall. After what a few teachers called "considerable nudging" by the principal, they accepted the project in winter. Some teachers in this school did not participate in the initial peer coaching sessions but joined the project later after they saw how successful and nonthreatening it was.

The Peer Coaching Project

The 24 teachers in School A attended a short meeting with the consultant in October to learn about the project and its time requirements. Before any peer coaching began, each teacher was videotaped teaching for 20 minutes. This videotape was for the teacher's use only, not for evaluation or outside analysis. Next, everyone met again briefly before school to learn how to observe, record events, and give feedback. The consultant reviewed selected practices from the effective teaching training (such as motivation, lesson design, or active participation), so that teachers could concentrate on these in their observations. Finally, teachers wrote down three preferred coaching partners, and the consultant made the assignments.

The consultant and the teachers met every few weeks throughout the semester to discuss the peer coaching process and to review a new skill area. Each coaching pair did four to six observations using modified versions of Cummings' Interactive Teaching Map (Cummings 1983). The consultant substituted in the teachers' classes, demonstrated conferencing techniques, and served as a coach upon request. At the end of the semester each teacher was videotaped again and encouraged to analyze the tape.

The 17 teachers in School B followed these same processes between January and May, but with a different order of review topics. During these months School A continued peer coaching with less outside support.

Results of the Study

All teachers completed rating-scale questionnaires before and after the project. In the spring, an outside evaluator interviewed 19 teachers in School A and 17 teachers in School B. The results of the evaluator's analysis of the questionnaires and interview protocols are summarized here.

Observation, advice, and feedback from others. Several questions dealt with the frequency and helpfulness of feedback from administrators and colleagues. When asked before the project how often other teachers observed them, 14 percent of the participants responded "frequently" or "occasionally." At the end of the year, 62 percent gave one of these responses.

Before the project, 25 percent said they received feedback on their instruction "frequently" or "occasionally," compared to an 89 percent response rate after peer coaching. Clearly, peer coaching increased teachers' opportunities for observation and feedback.

"Before the project, 25 percent said they received feedback on their instruction 'frequently' or 'occasionally,' compared to an 89 percent response rate after peer coaching."

Before the project, 52 percent of the teachers in the two schools rated the advice they received regarding instruction as "very helpful." After peer coaching, 75 percent did so. Apparently, the reviews of effective practices and the collegial sharing during the coaching sessions produced helpful professional interaction.

Teachers' comments during the interviews illustrated these positive results. For example, one teacher said, "I could see so much more, and once you're able to see what you are doing—both plus and minus—it's great." Another participant summed up the benefits of more and better feedback, "It's been great opening up to another member of the staff. I had never before explored teaching with another teacher, nor had I gone into depth regarding improving teaching."

Just having videotapes of their teaching was also seen as a valuable source of feedback. One teacher reported her husband's reaction to the tape: "He walked in, watched for a while, and said, 'Boy, you really work hard.'" Another teacher showed the tape to her class and had them analyze it for their noise level and behavior.

Collegiality. Two items on the questionnaire related to collegiality. Before the project, 25 percent of the sample as a whole reported that they discussed effective teaching "frequently" (as opposed to "occasionally," "rarely," or "never") with their peers. After the project, 40 percent said they discussed teaching "frequently." Before the project 18 percent said they "frequently" turned to someone else to help them with an instructional need or concern; after the project, 45 percent said they did so.

During the interviews, 13 teachers said that "having a professional colleague as a partner" was one of the main personal benefits of the Peer Coaching Project. Several comments echoed this sentiment; for example, one teacher said, "The most important part is getting the chance to get into another teacher's room. My doors are now open and will remain so."

The Peer Coaching Project succeeded in increasing teacher to teacher interaction in both schools. Both the principals and 25 teachers reported much more sharing of teaching ideas and discussion of instruction in the lounge, in the halls, and at lunch. Typical comments were, "Now people are talking more about their lessons and less about individual kids. They are sharing techniques for motivation and active participation. They are teaching and learning from each other."

Experimentation. Three queries on the questionnaire addressed experimentation. Before peer coaching, 54 percent of the teachers said they "frequently" tried something new in their classrooms. (All had been through effective teaching training recently.) After peer coaching, this number went up to 70 percent. Before training, 35 percent of the group said that when trying something new in their classes, they were "very confident" (as opposed to "confident," "somewhat confident," or "very lacking in confidence"). After training, 67 percent said they were "much more" confident when trying new practices. One teacher said, "I have taught for nine years, and this is the biggest year of professional growth I've ever had."

Finally, teachers were asked, "When you try a new technique for the first time and it doesn't work well, how likely are you now to try it again?" Before training, 13 percent responded "very likely" (as opposed to "somewhat likely," "not very likely," or "not at all likely"). After training, 59 percent were "very likely" to try again. As one teacher put it, "It brought to life a lot of things I know I should do and had tried, but had not continued. It gave me an impetus, having a colleague I respect critique my teaching."

Several teachers also commented on how much more "automatic" they were with the techniques they had reviewed as part of the peer coaching project. One teacher reflected, "Before the project, using lesson design was a conscious, deliberate effort. Now the concepts are much more a part of my daily teaching."

"During the interviews, 13 teachers said that 'having a professional colleague as a partner' was one of the main personal benefits of the Peer Coaching Project."

Student learning. At the end of the first year, 70 percent of the teachers said that their students were "very likely" learning more as a result of the skills they had gained from the Peer Coaching Project. In the interviews, 27 teachers said that their students were definitely more attentive and more actively involved in lessons. One noted that the work on motivation and reinforcement had "helped increase self-esteem and reduce behavior problems."

Nine teachers reported greater student success, and some backed up their claims with specific examples. For example, one teacher reported all As and Bs on her test of fractions—"better results than any comparable group from prior years." Another noted, "The evidence of the effectiveness of these techniques is in the success levels on tests I gave after I taught something using lesson design. The information used to go in one ear and out the other. Now they retain it so much longer."

Concerns and comfort with peer coaching. Creating a supportive climate for participation is an important aspect of implementing peer coaching. Teachers may feel threatened by the idea of having a peer in their classroom "observing" them. In the Ann Arbor Schools Peer Coaching Project, staff made every effort to create readiness and trust before any observations took place. Several factors contributed to the healthy climate. First, the entire teaching staff had to agree to participate. Also, the consultant was on-site at least three days a week. And teachers' concerns were carefully attended to.

When asked what was their greatest concern about participating in the Peer Coaching Project, 24 out of 36 teachers mentioned competing demands for their time, getting overcommitted, and so on. Eleven said they had been worried that the peer observations would be evaluative or judging: "I don't mind making mistakes, but I don't like having an audience." Surprisingly, 13 teachers said they had had no concerns at the beginning and were eager to try it.

Hall and Loucks (1978) have highlighted the importance of attending to the concerns of teachers as they are asked to implement something new. How were these teachers' concerns about peer coaching attended to? Sixteen teachers commented on the consultant's supportiveness. Typical remarks are, "She did a nice job of anticipating our concerns and dealing with them" and "She made it painless."

Teachers also viewed as very helpful the substitute teaching provided by the consultant or a substitute while they did their observations (12 comments). Other comments referred to the confidentiality of the process, the well-organized project, and the short modeling sessions. One teacher summed it up, "There was no pressure. She told us, 'We'll take it step by step. I'll help you.'"

Another factor that allayed teachers' concerns was that the principals were required to participate in the project. The principals were observed as they taught demonstration lessons and as they observed their coaching partners. As one teacher put it, "If he can be that gutsy, I guess we can take some chances too." Interestingly, two teachers who were being evaluated that year selected the principal as a partner. They felt their evaluations would

be more thorough when linked to peer coaching.

Collegiality and Experimentation

In spite of some initial differences between the two schools in their approaches to the Peer Coaching Project, the outcomes reflected by the questionnaires and interviews indicate that teachers in both schools became comfortable with the process and found it useful in improving collegiality, experimentation, and student learning.

If we want to ensure the success of school improvement and staff development, creating school norms of collegiality and experimentation is crucial. This study indicates that an entire school, with proper support, can implement peer coaching that results in greater communication about and experimentation with teaching techniques. □

1. Schools with successful staff development programs are characterized by norms of collegiality and experimentation (Little 1982). One process used to increase these norms is peer coaching.

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Peer Coaching: One District's Experience in Using Teachers as Staff Developers

One district's experience with peer coaching provides practical suggestions for enabling teachers to support teachers as their own staff developers.

DIANA LEGGETT
SHARON HOYLE

Peer coaching is effective in improving teachers' instructional skills (Fullan, 1982; Joyce & Showers, 1982; Showers, 1985). There are few practical suggestions, however, as to how to implement peer coaching in a district.

This article provides a picture of one district's experience with peer coaching — using teachers as their own staff developers — to improve performance in the classroom. First, problems associated with traditional inservice education are discussed. Next, the Mastery Learning Keystone Project in the Forth Worth (TX) Independent School District is described. The article ends with some observations and implications of the peer coaching program which was part of the Keystone Project.

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Problems with Traditional Inservice Education

Reasons for Problems

Fullan (1982) identified several reasons for failure of traditional methods of staff development:

1. **Preponderance of one-shot workshops**. Topics are often not selected by teachers themselves, are presented during one session with teacher attendance mandatory, and then are never touched upon again.
2. **Failure to provide follow up for individual teachers**. No one to provides support, feedback, and suggestions for teachers who wish to try new strategies upon returning to their classrooms.
3. **Inservice programs rarely address individual needs and concerns.** Teachers may have other priorities to consider at the building and classroom levels besides those addressed at the particular workshop (see also Hall & Loucks, 1977).
4. **Failure to provide support at the school level for the new skill**. There is often no one available at the school to help teachers figure out how to deal with problems that may affect implementation of the new skill.

As a result, teachers are alone and unaided as they return to their classrooms and attempt to try the new strategies they have learned in workshops. According to Fullan, "The absence of follow-up after workshops is the greatest single problem in contemporary professional development." Rosenholtz and Kyle (1984) contend that professional dialogue among colleagues is essential because it promotes discussion of teaching problems and possible solutions which leads to the development of teachers' skills.

Remedies for Problems

If traditional methods are lacking, what can be done to accomplish their intended purpose? Fullan (1982) proposed the following guidelines for the development of effective professional development programs.

1. Programs should focus specifically on job-related tasks and problems — which may be unique to each school.
2. Professional development should generally include the components found by Joyce and Showers (1982) to be necessary for a change in practice: theory, demonstration, practice with feedback, and application with coaching.
3. A series of several follow-through sessions is crucial during which people have the chance to try techniques with access to help or other resources.
4. A variety of formal and informal elements should be coordinated: training sessions and sharing sessions, teacher-to-teacher interaction, one-to-one assistance, and meetings.

Most of these factors include elements that can be dealt with adequately only at the building level. Teachers must deal

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with problems encountered at the local level, and the application to the classroom can only be done by teachers in the school setting. Peer coaching, the practice of teachers observing and conferring with each other on the use of appropriate techniques, can provide the essential follow-up that must accompany professional development.

Combined with training in the basic "how to" of using a particular skill, peer coaching provides a focus on those specific job-related tasks as they fit a teacher's particular classroom and/or building environment. It also provides informal, one-to-one assistance during that critical implementation phase when a teacher tries out a new skill. In addition, and perhaps most importantly, peer coaching provides a break in the isolation that impedes the improvement of instructional skills, and hence student learning.

The Mastery Learning Keystone Project

Using staff development research as a basis for decision making, the Fort Worth (TX) Independent School District began a new approach to teacher training. In 1984, the privately-funded Sid Richardson Foundation dedicated to the improvement of Fort Worth, allocated funds for the improvement of instruction in the Fort Worth ISD. This project was named the Keystone Project in recognition that the teacher is the keystone of all instruction. The objectives of the project provided for a district-wide program of teacher training in the use of outcome based mastery learning strategies through the use of teacher trainers. The Keystone project is described in the following sections.

Teacher Training for Instructional Improvement

The project provided a common core of training on a voluntary basis for all teachers in the district that was centered on research-validated methods for improving instruction. This was no small undertaking for a district of 61 elementary schools, 18 middle schools, 12 high schools, and various special program schools in which 3,700 teachers serve approximately 67,000 students. To facilitate this, the project funding provided a $330 stipend for teachers completing a 30 hour training program referred to as a Professional Development Term (PDT). The PDT provided a "common core" of training in planning for mastery, writing objectives, task analyzing, developing formative and summative tests, and planning lessons.

Based on their needs, teachers could subsequently take additional training in classroom management, motivation, active student participation, and using Bloom's Taxonomy.

The training itself was provided by the Keystone staff, which included 16 mastery learning specialists. These specialists were classroom teachers, and one critical component of each specialist's job was to continue to teach at least two classes per day in order to keep current and refine instructional skills. To help provide the amount of training needed for the district, a cadre of teacher trainers was also recruited. School needs were provided for by organizing the optional workshop hours and locations around the perceived needs of teachers and principals in clusters of buildings. The Professional Development Term also ensured a base of common knowledge and terminology for all teachers.

Coaching as Follow-up to Training

The teacher-trainers dedicated themselves to the implementation of coaching as a means of ensuring that the training carried over into the classroom. Before implementation could occur, it was determined that certain questions needed to be addressed that would determine the nature and structure of the model created.

First came the question of the purpose of coaching. Was it to improve instruction and to transfer specific newly acquired behaviors from the workshop to the classroom? Or was it a process unto itself to be implemented by teachers on the basis of objectives they themselves developed? Since the Keystone Project's goal was instructional improvement through a structured training program, coaching had to be a vehicle of implementation.

Second, should the model be a peer-to-peer model where persons at the same job level coach each other, or should it be a program which would create "master teachers" who would be designated and trained to serve as coaches at a building level? The peer-to-peer model was selected. Interested teachers in a school were to work as partners or teams in supporting each other in the use of newly acquired instructional strategies. To accomplish this, coaching was embedded in each PDT so that teachers would have the necessary skills to work collaboratively at the building level.

Workshop participants had opportunities to observe peers and give specific feedback within the workshop setting.

Training for Coaching

Showers (1983) emphasized that teachers must be trained to coach. Therefore, a 6-hour component on coaching was scheduled in each Professional Development Term (PDT) immediately after teachers had completed the first 12-hour common core workshop. This training of coaching provided participants with:

- A framework for the purpose of coaching
- Practice in observation skills
- Practice with notetaking (script taping) as a source of data collection
- Practice in giving specific feedback from the notes taken during an observation
- Practice in observing videotaped teaching episodes for specified practices taught in the first 12 hours of training (planning units, developing lessons, and delivering them)

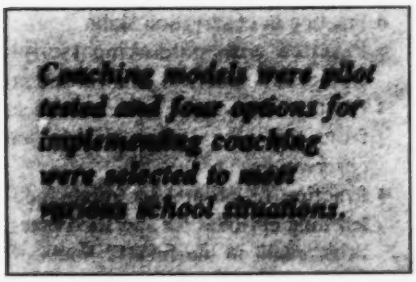
Teacher trainers incorporated coaching into subsequent workshop segments by providing participants with opportunities to observe peers and give specific feedback within the workshop setting. For example, participants taking the classroom management class worked in small

peer groups. Each person taught a signal, observed a partner teaching, and gave that partner specific feedback on the teaching of the signal. In this way, each workshop objective was paired with the observation/feedback skills learned in the initial 6 hours of peer coaching class. This gave all participants not only practice related to a specified workshop objective, but also practice in the first phase of coaching — observation/specific feedback. This was the first step in the training of teachers in the process of coaching, and it provided the foundation for a building-level program of peer coaching and staff development.

Models of Coaching Used

To implement coaching at the building level, the organizational model had to be flexible in order to meet the diverse needs of a large school district. Consequently, coaching models were pilot tested and four options for implementing coaching were selected to meet various school situations.

The organization and scheduling of the peer coaching of these four options was a collaborative process involving the mastery learning specialists and the school's principal. A specialist consulted with the principal on possible coaching options based on the interests and needs of the teachers. Once an organizational model was selected, the specialist assumed the responsibility for scheduling, arranging for substitute teachers, providing for any training needed, monitoring the coaching process, and providing feedback to coaching partners.


Coaching models were pilot tested and four options for implementing coaching were selected to meet various school situations.

The four coaching models are described below.

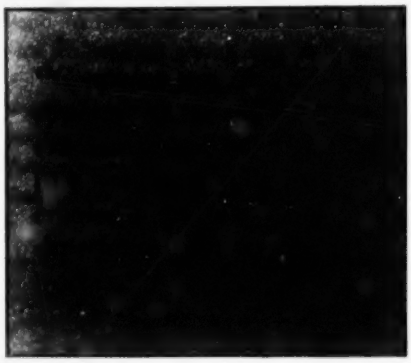
Guided Practice in a Group. This approach provided teachers with an opportunity to practice notetaking and giving technical feedback in a classroom setting before actually working with a coaching partner. In this model, a group of teachers who had completed training in outcome-based instruction and peer coaching skills visited the class of a demonstration teacher who was accustomed to being observed. The group, along with a mastery learning specialist, observed and script-taped the demonstration teacher's class. The specialist then helped the group process their notes and gave feedback to the demonstration teacher. If another guided practice session was desired, the specialist led the peer observers to take a more active role in processing notes and leading the conference themselves. From these guided practice experiences, teachers then formed partnerships for peer coaching.

Coaching for New Teachers. Another model or peer coaching was designed for teachers new to the district. New teachers were invited to join an ongoing staff development program designed to provide follow-up peer coaching as soon as each instructional skill was introduced. New teachers generally started with the classroom management workshop which began in October and continued through the fall semester. As each separate management skill was taught in a workshop setting, follow-up coaching sessions were scheduled to put this skill in place before the next skill was taught. Coaching follow-up was done by a peer and by a mastery learning specialist.

On-Site Coaching. A third coaching model involved on-site coaching in which all teachers in selected buildings who had completed a 6-hour Peer Coaching workshop were given the opportunity to participate in 2 days of coaching practice. Teachers who volunteered were divided into groups according to their level of training and grade level. Each coaching segment consisted of three parts: the pre-observation conference, the observation, and the conference.

At the pre-observation conference, peer observers were given information (either through review or through the introduction of a new skill or method) concerning the skill which they would observe. The first segment of the review usually focused on the lesson cycle, and participants were given hints for script taping. The focus for subsequent sessions was determined by the participants from options including active participation, motivation, and time-on-task.

Classroom observations followed the pre-observation conference. Demonstration lessons were taught by mastery learning specialists using one of the participating teachers's classes. Prior to the conference, participants examined their notes and highlighted examples of the skill being introduced/reviewed. A mastery learning specialist then led a discussion, asking teachers to comment and use their notes to give specific details from the lesson. The conference was then modeled by the specialist as a group observed.



From this practice, teacher partners or teams were organized and the skill being observed became the focus for instructional refinement. Each teacher would then begin to consciously practice and work with this targeted skill. As the teacher practiced, he or she received feedback from a peer and the mastery learning specialist monitored the coaching process.

Released Time Seminars. In the fourth coaching model, teachers were released from their classrooms, through the use of substitute teachers, to attend half-day or full day training seminars conducted by mastery learning specialists and/or a cadre teacher/trainer. Content of the seminar usually concerned advanced concepts of active participation, academic learning time, or lesson design. Participants signed up with a partner, and returned to their buildings prepared to observe and coach each other on the newly acquired skill. Sometimes this form of coaching involved taking the usual script-tape data, and sometimes another process (seating chart, checklist) was used to gather data. After seminar partners began to observe and coach on regular schedule, a mastery learning specialist observed the partners in an effort to refine their instruction.

This model was used throughout the district when specific needs were identified. To participate in this advanced coaching model, teachers were required to have taken the peer coaching class and to have participated in some coaching practice.

Teacher Response to Coaching

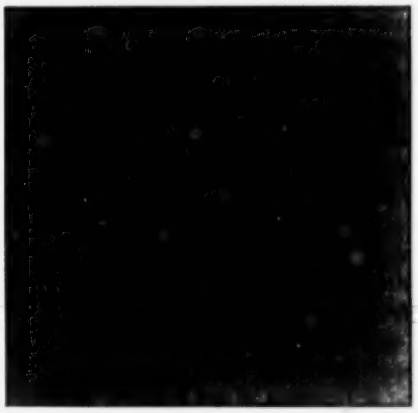
How did teachers feel about coaching each other? Many participants found peer coaching a valuable experience and a means of helping each other develop professionally. The following statements from participating teachers reflect the overall positive reaction.

> "Peer coaching gives us a very useful tool for consistent self-evaluation, peer involvement, and constructive relevant input."
>
> "It was an opportunity for self-evaluation and improvement in a nonthreatening way. It created a sharing experience with my co-worker."
>
> "Having other teachers observe my classes gives me feedback on my strengths and weaknesses without having to be evaluated by an administrator."
>
> "The feedback has also given me insight into what is actually taking place in my classroom through another set of eyes. I feel that my effectiveness has been greatly increased through the peer coaching process."
>
> "Even the best teachers get complacent, but when someone comes in to give nonjudgmental feedback, you are able to assess yourself. Instead of giving answers, it gives us information so we can determine and analyze our own strengths and weaknesses."

Conclusions

Effective Professional Development

Peer coaching is a positive response to some of the problems of traditional in-service offerings. Instead of one-shot workshops with no follow-up, peer coaching provides an ongoing focus on a specific skill or strategy that enables the teacher to carry training back to the classroom. In coaching conferences, peers can discuss individual and school needs as well as give and receive feedback about that specific skill being observed. Coaching reduces isolation, which blocks development, by providing the professional dialogue that Rosenholtz and Kyle (1984) deemed so essential and encourages teachers to generate solutions to their own problems.



Planning a Coaching Model

As a result of our experiences with implementing peer coaching, we found several factors that we think would affect coaching. One factor is the need to have a clear statement of purpose for the coaching. Any district which intends to implement coaching should first decide whether coaching should facilitate the implementation of specific training or allow teachers to set objectives for themselves. Second, a decision needs to be made about who should coach — peers to peers or "master teachers" to teachers in a school or group of schools.

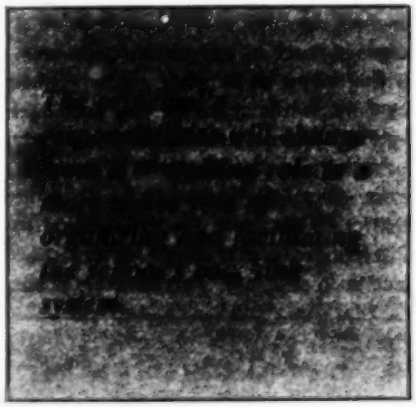
A third factor is the need to provide consistent training across the district to ensure that all participants have the same foundation of knowledge. Coaching training is also necessary to provide prospective coaches with practice in the skills needed for data collection and to provide specific feedback. Coaching training also enables coaching partners to be aware of what to expect during the coaching process.

Another factor is the importance of having coaching be a voluntary activity. In some unfortunate cases where teachers were coerced into enrolling in training by principals who "insisted" that they attend, participation was limited and grudging. These teachers consistently found fault with the presentations, presenters, facilities, materials, and the times and places selected for classes. They had not perceived a need to be there and consequently became defensive in the workshop sessions; few, if any, elected to participate in follow-up coaching.

In delightful contrast, teachers who became interested in the classes and enrolled voluntarily became enthusiastic supporters of the training process. Many decided to give peer coaching a try. Their successful experiences in collegiality, improved use of skills, and increased professional awareness began to permeate other teachers in the same building. This led others to enroll and try the experience for themselves, thus expanding the network of teachers helping teachers in the school.

Role of the Principal in Planning

The principal's role in initiating peer coaching was primarily to provide support as the mastery learning specialist organized the coaching experience. However, with increasing district emphasis on site-based management and on the principal as the instructional leader, the principal's role in implementing coaching may change. As the concept of site-based manager evolves, there will no doubt be a shift in the principal's responsibilities from a consulting role to a more active role of organizing and facilitating the school's coaching system.



As Showers (1984) pointed out, the principal must establish a climate which encourages professional growth and fosters collegial relationships. Through interaction with the teachers, a principal should communicate expectations, encourage and reward professional growth, and establish a safe environment for the observation/coaching process by a policy of non-

interference. It is only by the principal assuming an active role that coaching can become an ongoing process.

As the principal's role becomes a more active one, the Keystone staff intends to provide principals with support in this transition. Training will be provided for principals which will assist them in creating the desired climate, in organizing the logistics of a coaching program, and in developing options for flexible time and staff utilization. The mastery learning specialists' role will shift from an active to a supporting role. At that point, coaching will become institutionalized.

Changes in the Program

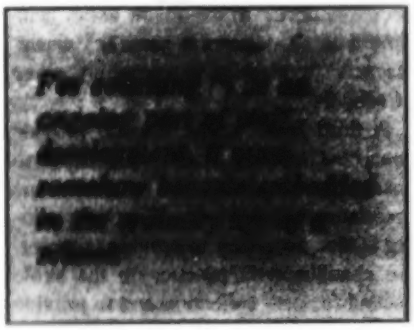
As teachers completed the initial phases of training and gained understanding of the concepts presented in the basic workshop, they became ready and eager to participate in new and additional training. Consequently, we found it necessary to provide additional training segments, and we will need to continue that process.

Teachers also wanted to progress beyond only giving technical feedback. Showers (1985) maintained that as teachers' skills in coaching develop, the process moves beyond the technical feedback stage into the more complex realm of mutual examination of the appropriate use of a new teaching strategy. This encompasses mutual problem-solving and joint planning for new lessons. Some teachers naturally evolve into those other stages of coaching and are able to progress to that point with relative ease. Other teachers, while realizing that technical feedback alone is no longer completely satisfying, are at a loss as to how to progress. Therefore, there is a need for the district to structure the progression to different phases of coaching for those who need such structure. This structure needs to be flexible to allow for participants at different stages of development.

As more and more teachers progressed through the initial stages of training and coaching, it became apparent that for coaching to be an ongoing part of staff development, it must somehow become embedded in the ordinary life of a school. With that end in mind, specialists have formed permanent coaching teams in buildings that have both enough people with the necessary training in place and administrative support and approval. These teams are formed of partners who choose their own goals for coaching and who coach each other at regular, frequent intervals throughout the year.

Transition to a District-Wide Effort

As building teams grow and more people acquire training and indicate interest in coaching, it will become necessary for the district to assume the role currently performed by the Keystone Project. The positive side of our present situation is that many people across the district now have 30 hours of basic training, which at the very least prepares them to make positive instructional changes in their classrooms. Unfortunately, many teachers who are not presently coaching would like to do so, but cannot because of the limited staff available.



It will be impossible for coaching to become a permanent part of staff development until the district furnishes the funding which pays trainers for training and provides for substitute teachers during the coaching sessions and principals begin to assume an active role by facilitating the logistics of peer coaching (e.g., scheduling, arranging for substitute teachers, removing building level roadblocks).

A transition process is occurring in which the Keystone Project's coaching program is becoming a permanent part of the district's training program. In the meantime, the staff of the Keystone Project will continue to make the peer coaching experience available to as many teachers as possible, promoting the good effects of teachers helping teachers to grow professionally.

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Patricia Raney and Pam Robbins

Professional Growth and Support through Peer Coaching

In a Sonoma County, California, school district, the spirit of companionship and experimentation created during coaching training has spilled over into daily life.

In 1985 the Old Adobe Union School District, in Sonoma County, California, implemented a peer coaching program to provide support to newly hired teachers and to offer leadership roles to experienced teachers.[1] The need for such a program first became evident when, after 10 years of declining enrollment, the district suddenly faced an increase that allowed the hiring of additional teachers. With enrollment increasing, the principals did not have time to give the new teachers the support they deserved and needed. As a result, many were overwhelmed by classroom demands. When one of them resigned after two months, citing undue stress as the reason, district administrators began searching for a solution.

At the time, Old Adobe District had in place a long-range plan to train teachers in instructional strategies. Between 1982 and 1985, all teachers had attended five-day workshops based on the Hunter model of teaching. Teachers and administrators therefore had a common language for talking about teaching, but there had been no follow-through to help them maintain their new skills, and they had found few opportunities to talk about teaching.

In 1983 another event had encouraged district officials to take action. California had enacted Senate Bill 813, requiring school districts to address the needs of probationary teachers. Old Adobe District elected to try to meet all these different needs—those of new teachers, those of probationary teachers, and those of experienced teachers—through peer coaching.

Being able to laugh and joke about mistakes facilitated shared examination of teaching, opportunities for reflection, self-analysis, and growth.

Becoming Peer Coaches

In spring 1986, 11 teachers volunteered to become the first peer coaches. An additional 14 teachers received training the following spring. Under the direction of Pam Robbins, the training addressed seven major content areas (see fig. 1). On the first day, Robbins defined *colleague coaching* and presented its rationale and research base. She asked teachers and principals to envision colleague coaching, or peer coaching, in its ideal state—what it would look like, sound like, feel like. Their recorded responses became the ground rules that governed ensuing peer coaching activities and that eventually culminated in the program's being renamed "Peer Sharing and Caring."

Participants received intensive training in Cognitive Coaching (Costa and Garmston 1985), one of the exemplary models they surveyed. In Cognitive Coaching, during the preconference, the teacher makes explicit for the observer the intended purpose of the lesson, expected student outcomes and behaviors, planned teaching behaviors and strategies, any concerns about the lesson, and the desired focus of the observation. During the observation, the observer collects in-

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formation about the instructional curricular elements identified by the teacher. After the observation, the two discuss what actually happened during the lesson, as opposed to what was planned. The observer facilitates this analysis by asking questions that prompt the teacher to reflect on the lesson, recalling actual teacher and student behaviors. An integral part of the postconference is a discussion of what the observer did that facilitated or hindered the learning process for the teacher. Together they learn, each from a different perspective, about the business of teaching, observing, and supporting one another.

During the session, "Factors Influencing Peer Coaching Relationships," participants examined various elements (cognitive styles, educational beliefs, modality preferences) that influence what they value, how they communicate, and what they look for during observations. From this exploration, the teachers gained an appreciation for the diverse ways a lesson can be planned, delivered, thought about, and discussed. They later reported that the session helped build trust and acceptance and increased their ability to concentrate on the *practice* of teaching, separate from the *person* doing the teaching.

Throughout all the sessions, the presenters provided theory, demonstration, practice opportunities, and feedback. Then the participants planned how they would implement the new strategies back in their schools. After practicing in groups of two or three to perfect their coaching skills, each experienced teacher was assigned a new teacher to coach.

Sharing and Caring

In the follow-up meetings, the teacher-coaches shared successes and grappled with challenges, and a spirit of companionship and experimentation emerged. As they realized that others experienced the same frustrations and doubts, they became comfortable talking about difficult issues. Light hearted humor was an integral part of every meeting. Being able to laugh and joke about mistakes facilitated shared examination of teaching, opportunities for reflection, self analysis, and growth.

Coaching new teachers also sensitized the coaches to their own daily interactions with students. At one workshop, a teacher shared this experience:

> During the presentation of new concepts, I caught myself in the middle of a monologue that went something like: "Matt, you *still don't understand*. I can't believe you don't get it. I've explained it three different ways, it's written on the board, and everyone else understands."
>
> Suddenly, I became painfully aware that I was putting the student down. I caught my breath and said, "It's okay. This is really hard stuff. No one understands it. I don't know why I'm teaching it. I don't understand it—that's it." I threw the chalk down and said, "Let's go to recess."

The laughter shared over this reflection was very different from the nervous laughter that sometimes occurs in groups where the members do not allow themselves to be vulnerable for fear of being judged less competent than others. By modeling that it is okay to experiment and not to be perfect, Robbins had set a tone of trust and acceptance, and the group had maintained the feeling "we're all in this together."

As the project progressed, the teachers expressed the idea that the term *coaching* implied an unequal relationship. Thus, they unanimously supported changing the name of the program from "Peer Coaching" to "Peer Sharing and Caring," which implied equality, safety, and support.

Making Peer Coaching Work

In Old Adobe, several factors were critical to the success of Peer Sharing and Caring. Participation was, of course, voluntary, and the training empowered teachers as well as equipping them with an expanded repertoire of coaching skills. Further, the training was ongoing, the coaches continued to meet as a group to learn from each other. Above all, the atmosphere was

Session 1:	• Overview of the research on peer coaching • A context for peer coaching — collaborative goal structures in schools — peer coaching, school norms, and culture — social and technical principles of coaching — organizing for peer coaching • Exemplary peer coaching models
Sessions 2, 3:	• Overview of observation instruments for coaching: from mirroring to coaching — interaction analysis — time-off-task — drop-in observation — cognitive coaching — script-taping — checklists
Session 4:	• Factors influencing peer coaching relationships: how we look, what we value • A model of factors influencing teacher thinking and behavior — modality preferences — educational beliefs — cognitive style
Session 5:	• Advanced conferencing skills — preconferencing — observing — postconferencing
Session 6:	• Fine-tuning communication skills — mediational questions — probing for specificity — identifying and staying aware of presuppositions
Session 7:	• Change theory and effective staff development practices — what the research says — implications for peer coaching — planning for maintenance

Fig. 1. Overview of Peer Coaching Training Sessions

supportive, so that teachers felt they could take risks. As one teacher said, "Anything worth doing is worth doing poorly, at first."

Beyond the training itself, financial and logistical support from the district was essential. Our superintendent and principals allocated funds for training, released time, and follow-up activities. To solve the problem of conflicts between meetings, for example, in 1987-88 the district scheduled peer coaching meetings monthly on faculty meeting days. And the principals agreed not to schedule staff meetings on the second Wednesday of each month to free that time for peer coaches from all four schools to meet together.

Further, the principals provided direction for the program by attending workshops with the coaches, modeling coaching behaviors, and responding to coaches' concerns. They also "ran interference" to free up time for teachers to coach and to be observed and saw that agreements and timelines were established and that coaches followed through on commitments.

Reaping the Benefits

The spirit that characterized the training environment has now become a part of the school culture. Coaching—or "Peer Sharing and Caring"—is a norm in Old Adobe. Each new teacher is assigned a coach who assists with instruction and introduces him or her to the way things are done at the school. Twenty-one new and probationary teachers have served since the program was initiated.

Prior to the program, parents as well as experienced teachers and the staff had voiced concerns about newly hired teachers. The overall impression was that, as a result of lack of experience, new teachers were covering the material too fast, that they were not assigning appropriate amounts of homework, and that the children were not achieving their potential. As peer coaches began spending time with the new teachers, these complaints decreased, and the new teachers also reported feeling less overwhelmed and stressed.

As a result of Peer Caring and Sharing, topics of conversation in the staff room are less often about personal matters and more frequently about the act of teaching and classroom management. Many teachers say they have been able to let go of "having" to be perfect," realizing that it is okay to let their rough edges show. There is an atmosphere of experimentation and openness to new ideas. Teachers eagerly consult their colleagues for assistance and share their own expertise. "In our diversity," one teacher remarked, "we are richer and can offer more to each other and to our students."

In addition to promoting collegiality and providing new teachers the support they so urgently need, the program has had beneficial effects on experienced teachers. The act of coaching gives the teacher-coach an opportunity to observe a classroom from an objective perspective. The insights a teacher gains during these observations often have applicability to his or her own classroom. In one teacher's words: "I learned more from my observation of others than I did from being observed and receiving feedback."

Exploring New Avenues

Peer Sharing and Caring has opened up avenues of communication between teachers from different grade levels and schools, between specialists and classroom teachers. Talking about teaching—reflecting on how they do what they do—has helped teachers develop a genuine appreciation and acceptance of others. Feelings of isolation and passivity have given way to an environment of collaboration and professional growth. In short, the norm has changed from "What others do is not my business" to "What we do here at school is everybody's business, and *business is booming*." □

1. The Old Adobe Union School District based its peer coaching program on the research of Joyce and Showers (1982), Little (1982), and Showers (1982, 1984, 1985).

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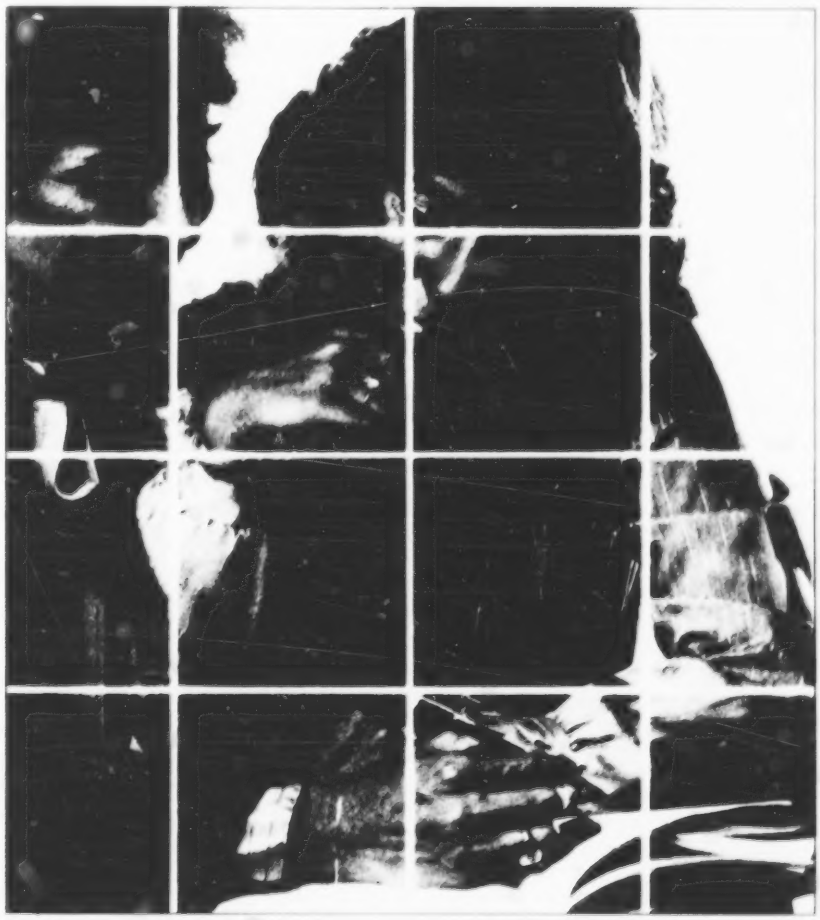
Beverly Showers

Teachers Coaching Teachers

Schools restructured to support the development of peer coaching teams create norms of collegiality and experimentation.

From two unlikely bedfellows—the world of athletics and research on the transfer of training—school districts are borrowing the concept of coaching to increase the effectiveness and acceptability of staff development.

Since "The Coaching of Teaching" appeared in *Educational Leadership* (Joyce and Showers, 1982), I have received many letters and calls about coaching. To deal directly with the nature of coaching—why we think it can work and how to plan it so that it will work—I draw largely from the research on coaching we have conducted at the University of Oregon, my own work with school districts, and our intensive experience with gifted administrators, supervisors, and teachers who attended the 1984 Summer Institute on Staff Development at the University of Oregon.



The Purposes of Coaching

Coaching has several purposes. The first is to build communities of teachers who continuously engage in the study of their craft. Coaching is as

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much a communal activity, a relationship among seeking professionals, as it is the exercise of a set of skills and a vital component of training.

Second, coaching develops the shared language and set of common understandings necessary for the collegial study of new knowledge and skills. Especially important is the agreement that curriculum and instruction need constant improvement and that expanding our repertoire of teaching skills requires hard work, in which the help of our colleagues is indispensable.

Third, coaching provides a structure for the follow up to training that is essential for acquiring new teaching skills and strategies. Researchers on teacher training (Joyce and Showers, 1983), curriculum implementation (Fullan and Pomfret, 19[illegible]), and curriculum reform (Shaver, Davis, and Helburn, 1978; Weiss, 1978) agree that transfer of skills and strategies foreign to the teacher's existing repertoire requires more substantial training than the training we typically allot to such enterprises. Coaching appears to be most appropriate when teachers wish to acquire unique configurations of teaching patterns and to master strategies that require new ways of thinking about learning objectives and the processes by which students achieve them. Minor changes, which constitute the "fine tuning" of existing skills, can be achieved more easily by teachers themselves. Good and Grouws (19[illegible]), Stallings (1979), and Slavin (1983) have developed programs that help teachers firm up and improve their teaching repertoires.

The Process of Coaching

In most settings coaching teams are organized during training designed to enhance the understanding and use of a teaching strategy or curriculum innovation. The teams study the rationale of the new skills, see them demonstrated, practice them, and learn to provide feedback to one another as they experiment with the skills.

From that point on, coaching is a cyclical process designed as an extension of training. The first steps are structured to increase skill with a new teaching strategy through observation and feedback. These early sessions provide opportunities for checking performance against expert models of behavior. In our practice and study of coaching, teachers use Clinical Assessment Forms to record the presence or absence of specific behaviors and the degree of thoroughness with which they are performed. Since all the teachers learn to use the forms during initial training sessions and are provided practice by checking their own and each others' performance with these forms, they are prepared to provide feedback to each other during the coaching phase. Whether teachers are studying new models of teaching, implementing a new curriculum or management system, or exploring new forms of collective decision making or team teaching, feedback must be accurate, specific, and nonevaluative.

As skill develops and solidifies, coaching moves into a more complex stage—mutual examination of appropriate use of a new teaching strategy. The cognitive aspects of transferring new behaviors into effective classroom practice are more difficult than the interactive moves of teaching. While all teachers can develop skill in performing a new teaching strategy fairly readily, the harder tasks come as the skill is applied in the classroom. For example, when teachers master inductive teaching strategies, such as concept attainment and inductive teaching, they have little difficulty learning the pattern of the models and carrying them out with materials provided to them. However, many teachers have difficulty selecting concepts to teach, reorganizing materials, teaching their students to respond to the new strategies, and creating lessons in areas in which they have not seen demonstrated directly. Generally, these are the kinds of tasks that become the substance of coaching. Each model of teaching and each curriculum generate similar problems that must be solved if transfer to the classroom is to be achieved.

As the process shifts to this second set of emphases, coaching conferences take on the character of collaborative problem-solving sessions, which often conclude with joint planning of lessons the team will experiment with. Team members (note that all members are both coaches and students) begin to operate in a spirit of exploration. They search for and analyze curriculum materials for appropriate use of strategies, hypothesize student responses and learning outcomes for specific strategies, and design lessons. The teacher experiments with a new lesson while the coach observes, and the experimentation continues with a new cycle of analysis, study hypothesis forming, and testing.

"Coaching develops the shared language and set of common understandings necessary for the collegial study of new knowledge and skills."

Length of Coaching

Ideally, coaching is a continuing process firmly embedded in the ethos and organizational context of the school. The teaching teams I have worked with have become increasingly effective both at helping one another and inducting new teachers into the process. However, as a new strategy is introduced we begin another two- to three-month process during which the intellectual demands of learning to use the model create the cycle of intensive interaction anew. Most of

our information from these early tests of coaching to determine its effects on transfer of training was gained in these experimental periods (following initial skills training). In some of these studies I have served as coach merely to learn more about the needs teachers express as they work through the transfer problem. I do not recommend that a trainer serve as the coach except to gain information. In other cases teachers have coached one another while I tried to learn what help they needed to work comfortably as peer coaches. Both the experimenter who served as a consultant/coach and the teachers who acted as peer coaches felt the time to master a model is longer than the three to four months we had originally anticipated. We are currently experimenting with long-term, institutionalized forms of coaching as a means of establishing continuous school improvement and self-help groups within schools.

Who Should Coach?

Teachers should coach each other. To do so, teaching teams need (1) familiarity with the new skill or strategy to be mastered and transferred into the teacher's active repertoire; (2) access to other teachers in their classrooms for purposes of observation, feedback, and conferences; and (3) openness to experimentation and willingness to persist and refine skills. Clearly no single role group possesses these attributes to the exclusion of others (supervisors and principals can coach effectively). However, the logistics involved in a continuous growing and learning process favor peer coaches, and teams can be built and learn the skills during training.

Training of Coaches

If peers are the most logical choice as coaches, it follows that the training of coaches most sensibly occurs during the training of the skills and behaviors that require coaching. As we teach a new strategy, we instruct all teachers in the use of Clinical Assessment Forms and model how to give feedback in the training sessions. After viewing and participating in multiple demonstrations of the strategy and the feedback process, teachers prepare lessons for their peers and present them to a partner. Then three pairs of partners (six teachers) form a peer teaching group, with partners providing feedback on each other's lessons. Trainers monitor the teaching and feedback process during peer teaching and provide additional demonstrations. Thus, training of coaches for the initial observation and feedback process is naturally incorporated into initial skills training.

Training for the second phase of coaching occurs during follow-up sessions, usually three to six weeks after introduction of a new teaching strategy. Teachers reassemble as a large group to discuss progress in their mastery of the moves of a model and any problems they are experiencing. Instruction now focuses on appropriate use of the strategy. Teachers bring examples of curriculum materials, texts, lesson plans, and instructional objectives to training sessions. At this point, trainers model a collegial dialog aimed at clarifying the instructional aims of the teachers, reexamining the theories of various instructional strategies and the purposes for which they were developed, and matching the two. Peer teaching in this phase of training focuses on the appropriate use of newly mastered teaching strategies rather than on the interactive skills required to execute the strategies.

The training of coaches is a continuing activity, as is coaching itself. The training component, however, becomes less prominent than the coaching process as teachers develop skill in coaching each other. Nevertheless, periodic sessions in which coaches review their self-help strategies are useful.

Effects of Coaching Programs

Results of coaching programs have been reported in detail elsewhere (Baker and Showers, 1984; Showers, 1983a, 1983b, 1984). The brief summary here merely reviews those results. Coaching effects fall into two broad categories: facilitation of transfer of training and development of norms of collegiality and experimentation.

Coaching appears to contribute to transfer of training in five ways. Coached teachers:

1. Generally (though not always) practice new strategies more frequently and develop greater skill in the actual moves of a new teaching strategy than do uncoached teachers who have experienced identical initial training.

2. Use the new strategies more appropriately in terms of their own instructional objectives and the theories of specific models of teaching (Showers, 1982, 1984).

3. Exhibit greater long-term retention of knowledge about and skill with strategies in which they have been coached and, as a group, increase the appropriateness of use of new teaching models over time (Baker, 1983).

4. Are much more likely than uncoached teachers to teach the new strategies to their students, ensuring that students understand the purpose of the strategy and the behaviors expected of them when using the strategy (Showers, 1984).

"Evaluation typically implies judgment about the adequacy of the person, whereas coaching implies assistance in a learning process."

"By placing the major responsibility for coaching with peers, status and power differentials are minimized."

5. Exhibit clearer cognitions with regard to the purposes and uses of the new strategies, as revealed through interviews, lesson plans, and classroom performance than do uncoached teachers (Showers, 1982, 1984). We are currently examining more closely teachers' progression of thinking as they learn and apply new models. We would like to accelerate the speed with which teachers can "learn how to learn" new strategies.

Coaching also appears to facilitate the professional and collegial relationships discussed by Little (1982); for example, development of a shared language and norms of experimentation. Our data about this process are somewhat less formal than our data on skill acquisition and transfer. However, both anecdotal and interview data indicate that the effects of coaching are much more far reaching than the mastery and integration of new knowledge and skills by individual teachers. The development of school norms that support the continuous study and improvement of teaching apparently build capability for other kinds of change, whether it is adoption of a new curriculum, a schoolwide discipline policy, or the building of teaching repertoires. By building permanent structures for collegial relationships, schools organize themselves for improvement in multiple areas. We suspect that the practice of public teaching, focus on the clinical acts of teaching, development of common language and understandings, and sharing of lesson plans, materials, and problems contribute to school norms of collegiality and experimentation. However, we don't know exactly how coaching programs function to create such norms or if existing norms create favorable climates for coaching programs. We are currently studying the formation and effects of coaching in districts and schools having different antecedent organizational climates and leadership patterns. We are also studying ways to prepare people to initiate the coaching process in their districts and schools.

As districts begin to include coaching as a part of their staff development programs, a variety of questions arise about coaching's relationship to different aspects of educational practice and roles played by various staff members. Questions often center on the relationship of coaching to teacher evaluation, distinctions between coaching and existing forms of supervision, and the roles of principals and central office staff.

Coaching and Evaluation

Coaching is a process in which education professionals assist each other in negotiating the distance between acquiring new skills or teaching strategies and applying them skillfully and effectively for instruction. The evaluation of teachers typically implies judgment about the adequacy of the person, whereas coaching implies assistance in a learning process. As we practice coaching, every aspect of the training process is carefully studied. Coaching teams measure their transfer of skills into the workplace and study the effectiveness of teaching skills and strategies with their students. In this sense, everything is evaluated. However, nothing could be farther from the atmosphere of coaching than is the practice of traditional evaluation. The norms of coaching and evaluation practice are antithetical and should be separated in our thinking as well as in practice. By definition, evaluation should not be undertaken concurrently with coaching, whereas the analysis of skills and their use is an inherent part of it.

After coaching has brought a teacher to a level of transfer in which newly learned behaviors are skillfully and appropriately applied, that teacher should study the effects on children as a means of improving performance. Teachers need sufficient time to learn and master new skills before they are evaluated on the adequacy of their performance of the new skills or the effects of those skills on student learning. We understand and argue for children's needs to acquire component skills of complex behaviors and, through practice, successive approximations of expert performance. Thus, we applaud their efforts in first recitals, junior sports, primitive essays, and early attempts at cooking. Likewise, we argue for development time for teachers in safe environments separate from evaluation as it is usually carried out.

Coaching and Supervision

What is the difference between coaching and supervision? This is a complicated question because of the many forms and different understandings of supervision.

The relationship between coaching and supervision in a district depends on the power of relationships between supervisors and teachers. Where teachers work in teams to study instruction and their relationships are balanced, coaching is compatible with supervision. Where there is an imbalance and where teachers are not organized for the mutual study of teaching, coaching and supervision are incompatible. The development of common languages for the study of teaching, the organization of inquiring teams, and the objective analysis of teaching are compatible.

However, supervision in many districts maintains the imbalance of power by placing administrators and other

nonteaching personnel in supervisory roles and by combining evaluation with supervision. Decision-making authority for the most part remains in the hands of the superiors, with teachers the recipients of the process.

Where there has been a failure to separate evaluation and the status and power differences from supervision, it is improbable that the process will create a climate conducive to learning and growing on the part of the teachers. Certainly it is possible to imagine climates where status relationships operate productively, but they do not appear to do so in education. One example of counter-productivity in another area is the extremely hierarchical structure of the military, which tends to prevent promotion of the leadership attributes most needed in times of war. The initiative required in effective teaching is incompatible with hierarchical dependency relationships as well.

Alone, the power differential operating in supervision is insufficient to impede learning—most of us seek expert help when we attempt to master a new skill, such as skiing, cooking, or writing. It is more likely that the evaluative component of supervision prevents the very climate essential for learning, that of experimentation and permission to fail, revision and trying again while continuously practicing new but still awkward skills and procedures. When evaluation is the end product of supervision, those being evaluated will generally put their best foot forward, demonstrate only those well-tested procedures that have been perfected over long periods of use and with which both they and their students are completely familiar. Even if these procedures are patently flawed, they are safer than attempting something new and experimental.

In divorcing itself from evaluation, coaching provides a safe environment in which to learn and perfect new teaching behaviors, experiment with variations of strategies, teach students new skills and expectations inherent in new strategies, and thoughtfully examine the results. By placing the major responsibility for coaching with peers, status and power differentials are minimized. Of course, coaching draws on many of the elements of better supervisory programs—observation, feedback, cooperative planning, extended time frames. However, the elimination of evaluation and power inequities makes possible a learning environment that is unlikely in traditional supervisory systems. Furthermore, coaching has the added practical advantage of a wide-scale implementation for lengthy periods of time. Even exceptionally conscientious principals with superb interpersonal staff relationships have difficulty providing clinical supervision to more than a fraction of their teachers on a continuing basis.

Coaching and the Role of the Principal

Establishing a coaching program requires strong leadership from principals as well as support from central administrative staff. The leadership is manifested in priority-setting, resource allocation, and logistics on the one hand and substantive and social leadership on the other.

"Principals must work to establish new norms that reward collegial planning, public teaching, constructive feedback, and experimentation."

Administrators need to examine carefully their priorities for staff development and their allocation of funds. Few staff development budgets can sustain both intensive, ongoing training and the numerous one-shot activities that dominate most programs. Decisions must be made regarding the outcomes expected of a staff development program. When the desired outcome is simply increased awareness of a subject, funding might legitimately support the occasional two-hour speaker. However, when the expected outcome of staff development is change in the instruction students receive, funding will probably have to be focused to support the magnitude of training necessary to bring about that change.

Organization of peer-coaching systems will need to be arranged cooperatively between district administrators and school site personnel. In schools where teachers already have preparation periods scheduled into their own work days, coaching teams can be organized for observation, feedback, and planning within existing structures. Some schools have used specialist teachers to release teachers for observation periods, and some principals regularly assume classes to provide observation time for teachers. In other cases, teachers have access to videotaped lessons for sharing at a later time when live observations could not be arranged. Substitute teachers can be provided for peer coaches one day per week in order for them to complete their observations and conferences (Showers, 1984). Creative problem solving by teachers and principals will result in solutions to the time demands of the continuous study and analysis of teaching. Without the active support and involvement of building principals, however, few teachers are able to establish such systems for themselves.

Principals must do more than assist with the logistics of peer coaching systems if coaching is to become institutionalized. Teachers have so long worked in isolation that long-term collegial working relationships with their peers may be uncomfortable

Principals must work to establish new norms that reward collegial planning, public teaching, constructive feedback, and experimentation. Professional growth must be seen as valuable and expected. Where coaching has flourished best, principals have taken very active roles in helping teams form, supporting them, providing times in meetings for sharing of teaching and planning, and providing help for team leaders.

Not only are principals in a unique position to influence building norms, they are also perfectly situated to facilitate the implementation of peer-coaching systems through collaborative problem solving with their teachers. Principals condesign flexible scheduling for training, observation, feedback, and planning to meet the needs of individual faculties; offer rewards and incentives to encourage developing norms of collegiality; and solicit support from parents and community members by explaining the purpose and expected outcomes of intensive training programs embedded in larger school improvement efforts.

Implementation of Coaching

To be implemented successfully, coaching must overcome some obstacles. The social changes required by coaching in the workplace represent a major departure from the traditional school organization. The building of collegial teams that study teaching on a continuing basis forces the restructuring of administrators and supervisory staff. If the norms of the learning laboratory are to be established, a *scientific* rather than hierarchical spirit must prevail. Implementation of coaching requires an increase in objective feedback and evaluation of process and a reduction of judgmental pronouncements about teaching. A coaching system builds a community of teachers that inquires into teaching with the assistance of support personnel rather than teachers who work as isolated individuals and are judged by supervisors and administrators who visit and observe.

Coaching is inseparable from an intensive training program. The serious and continuing study of teaching in schools requires challenging substance, for which theory is thoroughly explicated and understood, demonstrations are provided, and opportunities for practice with feedback allow development of skill as well as knowledge. Without fully elaborated training programs, coaching has nothing upon which to build. Whenever districts ask us to help them design coaching programs, we first examine their training programs for both content and process.

Furthermore, support systems in many districts must be remolded to permit the meeting of collegial teams for study, observations, feedback, discussion, and planning. And the activities of coaching teams must be encouraged and supported by norms, rewards, and incentives in the school structure. The invaluable role of principals in facilitating coaching programs cannot be too strongly emphasized.

The cooperation between central office administrators and building principals can be most clearly seen in the development of cadres of teachers and supervisors who are organized to deliver training. The cadres have to be selected, freed to receive and later to give training, and given access to teams within the schools to engage in training and help the teams develop. Without such cadres of trainers and the change of relationships that occurs when teachers and supervisors work together as trainers, coaching cannot be implemented.

At this stage, coaching is an innovation, subject to the same laws that govern any other change in an educational setting. It is also a community of learners engaged in the study of teaching, a set of technical moves embodied in training and follow-up to that training, and a support system that creates and sustains the learning community and enables it to function. Hence, coaching is not a simple additive that can be tacked on to the school with a "business as usual" attitude but rather represents a change in the conduct of business. Some of these changes are social and some are technical. On the surface it should be simple to implement—what could be more natural than teams of professional teachers working on content and skills with the facilitation of building principals and administrators? It is a complex innovation only because that scene requires a radical change in relationships between teachers and between teachers and administrative personnel. □

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A Powerful Strategy for Improving Staff Development and Inservice Education

Why Coaching?

Staff development activities frequently are handled like a visit to the doctor. After an injection or a few pills in the form of a one-day inservice on a hot topic, the patient is expected to improve. Enthusiasm runs high, everyone has a good time and there is hope that things will get better. Unfortunately, the initial enthusiasm and commitment dissipate rapidly as the teachers re-enter the classroom, face the daily routine and have little time or support for thinking about or practicing new skills or techniques.

Clinical supervision is an improvement on this the traditional inservice approach. The principal regularly works in the classroom, observes the teacher's efforts to improve, models the desired behavior and gives feedback and support. Principals are only human, however, and they have the same pressures of getting through the day and meeting all the responsibilities they had before, with no time for their new assignment.

An alternative (or a compatible, additional) strategy to clinical supervision is "peer coaching": teachers meet in small groups and observe each others' classrooms to get feedback about their own teaching behaviors, experiment with new improved techniques and get the support they need.

Coaching, as a strategy for staff development, emerges from recent studies on the effectiveness of inservice education. Bruce Joyce, Judith Warren Little, Tom Bird, Beverly Showers and others have stressed the idea that people develop mastery and application of new skills best when they are placed in coaching situations.

Figure 1 shows how coaching enhances other adult learning strategies. For example, if only the traditional lecture approach is used, very low classroom application results. Even when demonstrations are added, relatively little long term impact results. Only the addition of coaching to the other techniques produces high levels of knowledge mastery, skill acquisition and classroom application.

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Figure 1
TRAINING EFFECTIVENESS*

The degree of proficiency attained in knowledge, skill, and application is determined by the FIVE STEPS of the TRAINING DESIGN.

TRAINING STEPS	TRAINING STAGES		
	Knowledge Mastery	Skill Acquisition	Classroom Application
THEORY (Lecture)**	Middle/High	Low	Very Low
+			
DEMONSTRATION	High	Low/Middle	Very Low
+			
PRACTICE & FEEDBACK	High	High	Very Low
+			
CURRICULUM ADAPTATION	High	High	Low/Middle
+			
COACHING	High	High	High
+			
PERIODIC REVIEW	High	High	High

Key: Very Low = 5%
Low = 10%
Middle = 40%
High = 80%

* from Bruce Joyce

** Note: the rows are cumulative; the strength of coaching rests on the total effect of theory, demonstration, practice, curriculum and coaching.

What is coaching?

What is meant by coaching; what is it? At a common-sense level coaching involves what a good athletic coach does; it:

- Allows the student/learners to set their own goals (a good coach would never force a student into basketball if his/her real interest were in track);
- Breaks complex skills down into small units that can be learned (a basketball coach will have a student practice one skill, such as dribbling, at a time);
- Provides an expert model of the integrated behaviors involved;
- Allows for ample guided practice when the coach checks the behaviors and provides corrective feedback (athletic departments have learned the value of videotape for providing clear feedback to students);
- Encourages independent practice to build skill integration, automatic response, speed and accuracy;
- Praises and rewards students when they win; reassures and supports them when they don't (there are even sports psychologists now who help individuals and groups with their emotional responses to a variety of athletic situations).

Coaching for teachers (or for students) is not much different.

What are the elements of coaching?

Coaching consists of two elements: (1) an organizational arrangement consisting of a support group, and (2) peer observation.

Before we describe the elements, keep in mind the general atmosphere that must exist if coaching is going to work.

- There must be a general perception on the part of the people involved that they are good but can always get better; they can always improve what they are doing. This general orientation has been found to characterize effective schools.
- The teachers and principals involved must have a reasonable level of trust developed. They are confident that no one is going to distort the situation into a punishing one. As Tom Bird says, "There is a way of talking and acting which separates the question of practice and its consequences from the question of people and their competence, and which separates habits from self-esteem. Then, the practices and habits can be put on the table and dissected while the person who uses them remains intact."
- There must be an interpersonal climate in the building that conveys the sense that people care about each other and are willing to help each other.

If these preconditions don't exist, they must be the initial focus of an improvement effort. Coaching can be used to build such conditions if it is approached slowly, voluntarily, and in a non-threatening manner. It can't be started out in its full blown form if these conditions don't exist.

1. **The Support Groups**

The support group consists of three or four coaching teams. Each coaching team consists of two or three teachers who observe each other. Although a two-person team is satisfactory, sometimes three people are better because a third person added to the group reduces the effects of personality conflicts. Thus, the support group consists of from 6-12 people (nine or less would be best) organized into three teams.

The purpose of the support group is to provide professional stimulation, practical help based on the expertise of other teachers and personal support to those who are trying to improve their teaching.

Support groups meet on a regular basis, for example, every two to four weeks. (In between support group meetings, members of the coaching teams meet and carry out their peer observations.) Suggested topics for support group meetings would be as follows:

- Develop a mutually agreeable agenda, including a delineation of issues and concerns to be discussed, how much time will be spent on each problem and the priority that will be given to each.
- Review progress from the last meeting, including feedback from team members who were observed since the last meeting. (It is best if the person who was observed initiates this discussion and describes what he or she tried and learned; that person can involve the peer observer if desirable.) During this part of the meeting and throughout the entire process it is important that no judgments be expressed by others or advice given that is not solicited.
- Identify new teaching behaviors and activities on which individual participants or coaching teams will work before the next support group meeting. Problems should be stated as behaviorally as possible (e.g., "I want to reduce the number of oral outbursts from one of my children"). The person identifying a problem should be asked to clarify it by answering questions about how the problem occurs, when it occurs, what he or she is trying to accomplish, what has already been tried, etc. Other teachers should be asked what they have done that worked in similar situations. Avoid advice-giving; just describe what worked for you. (In McREL's Effective Schools Program, the new "problems" usually are assignments to try out new teaching strategies. For example, teachers may be asked to observe each others' classroom regarding student engaged time, new discipline methods, or an innovation like team games. In these situations the support group discussion might focus on the particular assignment, what it calls for and how best to carry it out. The team might also decide to seek ideas for improvement from sources beyond the experience of the group. In this case individuals might agree to identify ideas, programs or other resources that can be brought back to the group. There are many places teachers can turn to for help: a local or state teacher center, the state National Diffusion Network Facilitator, the nearest regional laboratory such as McREL, a college or university, ERIC, or a host of professional publications such as *Educational Leadership*.)
- Finally, the meeting should have closure. Actions that have been decoded upon should be summarized and those who have agreed to do something before the next meeting should commit themselves to taking action.

The work of the Support Group will be more effective if a facilitator and recorder are selected to organize and conduct the meeting. The facilitator is like a chairperson or moderator; he or she makes sure the meetings begin on time, that the agenda is developed with everyone's involvement, that everyone contributes, that no judgments are made and that the meeting is adjourned on time. The recorder uses newsprint to keep a record of the proceedings so that the next meeting can begin where the last left off and so that the agenda and action items are clear to everyone.

From time to time the group should also discuss the coaching process itself. The focus should be on the value of the process ("What helped you the most?"), particular strategies that worked well ("What things did the "coach" do that were most helpful?") and things that could be improved—this might be better handled by the coaches describing their experiences as coaches rather than teachers talking about their concerns as observers. Agreement to continue the process and institutionalize it should be an important purpose of this discussion.

2. **The Coaching Teams**

The work of the coaching teams consists of the following.

Discussion and Planning—(Pre-observational Meeting) Once the improvement focus which the team or individuals in the team are going to work on has been decided, members of the coaching team must develop a clear understanding of what specific behaviors or actions must take place to implement the desired changes. They must be sure the two or three team members understand the desired outcome or purpose of the activity and the specific steps that must take place to ensure that it is implemented. The situation will be different if each team member is working on their own, individual plans than if the team is working on something together.

At the heart of the discussion must be a clear delineation of the actions that the observer is supposed to record. The actions should be defined as behaviorally as possible. Developing an observation checklist is a good way to do this, depending on the specific innovation involved. For example, if one were trying to implement "Student Team Learning"* in the classroom some of the items on the checklist are described in the accompanying box.

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* See McREL's *Noteworthy*, Summer, 1981, for a discussion of "Student Team Learning"

SUGGESTED CHECKLIST FOR OBSERVING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STUDENT TEAM LEARNING

- The teacher explains the activity and checks students' understanding.
- The teacher assigns the students to learning teams of 3-5 in size so that each team contains students of different levels of attained skill or performance in the subject area. Each team, therefore, is composed of a high performer, a low performer and one to three students with mid-range performance.
- The teacher clearly explains the assignment both orally and in writing. S/he checks for understanding. S/he provides the students with a model of the desired performance and a list of resource materials that should be used or consulted to develop mastery of the materials.
- The teacher follows up with the groups during the period of independent work by providing them with a diagnostic tool to ascertain how they are doing, and coaching them about their interpersonal-group productivity.
- The teacher regroups the students into competitive teams following the study period (usually 3-4 days after the assignment has been given). The competitive teams are homogeneously constructed. That is, the competitive teams are formed so that the highest performers will compete among themselves in groups of 3-5; the lowest performers will compete among themselves, etc.
- During the competitive "testing" students will be provided with appropriate materials: e.g., a deck of cards for randomly distributing the order in which questions are asked, a set of objective questions, and an answer key.
- The teacher explains the competitive process, checking for understanding.
- The teacher provides one or two rounds of guided practice.
- The teacher lets the groups independently compete, walking around and providing assistance during the process as necessary.
- The teacher properly scores each team's work, announces the outcome, and supports students by helping them understand that work, not luck, was the reason for success and that Student Team Learning increased the opportunities for everyone to be successful.

Having such a checklist has two obvious advantages. It provides the person learning the activity with a clear understanding of what is expected and it provides the coach or observer with a clear, objective list of things to watch for.

Observation. Once everyone is ready, the teacher scheduled to conduct the observation does so. (If three teachers are involved, Teacher A observes Teacher B, who observes Teacher C, who observes Teacher A.) Students are prepared for the observation. For example, you might tell the students "Mrs. Smith, Mr. Ortega and I are working together to develop some activities that we think might help you learn more effectively. Mr. Ortega will be in the room tomorrow observing us as we try out a new way to develop group or team learning; he will be helping me decide how well it works. Please don't pay any attention to him. He will just be sitting in a chair up here in the corner making some notes. He won't participate in our work."

During the observation the observer should look only for the behaviors or activities that were agreed upon. The observer is not in the room to evaluate or pass judgment on the teacher. He or she should simply check to see what happens and record what is observable: "You did this . . . and then they did this. . . ."

If a detailed checklist has not been developed for the "coach" or observer to use to document what transpires in the classroom, a detailed log or script of what transpires should be kept. If complex student-teacher interactions are involved a tape recorder or, perhaps, even a videotape recorder might be used.

The use of a log or script helps avoid misunderstandings. It enables the coach to say things like: "After you corrected Johnny I watched him closely for the next few seconds. What he did was. . . ." This approach avoids making a value judgment such as: "You really weren't successful with Johnny because. . . ."

A check sheet or other instrument (such as McREL's Academic Efficiency Instrument) helps keep the feedback session objective as well. For example, it might enable the coach to say: "I measured your students' 'engaged rates' as you asked me to and here are the data I collected for 20 minutes." The more specific the teacher has been about what s/he wants the observer to watch for and record, the less threatening it is for both parties.

Feedback. As soon as possible after the observation period has ended the observer (coach) and teacher should meet to discuss what happened. This can be done with the third member of the team present or not — most prefer just a one-on-one between the observer and teacher. (It would be best if the principal did not attend this session unless s/he has been involved in the observation or unless the observed teacher wants the principal there.)

During the feedback session the discussion should be as objective as possible. It is usually best if the person being observed leads the discussion so the coach isn't in the position of pressing his/her view on the teacher. For example, the session might begin by having the coach ask the teacher: "Why don't you tell me how you think it

went—what went right or what went wrong and I'll share with you information that supports your own thoughts as well as things I might have seen that you didn't see." Usually the person observed has a pretty good idea of how things went and can save a lot of time and awkwardness by pointing out what he or she already knows. Then, the coach can say, "Why don't we just go down the checklist" (or whatever instrument was used) "and ask me for information about what I saw."

Thus, the observed teacher might go through the checklist and ask informational (rather than judgmental) questions: e.g., "What did you see when I was checking for understanding? Could you see any students who had problems I didn't address or did you see any of the students give signs (e.g., non-verbal signs) that they didn't understand even after I re-explained things to them?" If the person observed keeps pressing for information it will make it easier for the coach. Then, at the end of the discussion the coach should be asked if there were other observations made that would be relevant.

One of the absolute essentials in coaching is to be sure the relationship between the coach and the teacher is as professional as possible:

- Never talk to a third person about what was specifically observed.
- Don't let a member of the team draw the others into personal problems.

At the next support group meeting the facilitator should ask the person observed what happened, what was learned, etc. The facilitator should never ask the coach to comment. Only the person who was observed can bring the coach into the discussion; and, if he or she does not, the coach should not volunteer anything that was seen during the observation.

How do you implement the coaching process?

Attending to the process used to implement a coaching system is almost as important as the coaching activity itself. Without proper concern for the implementation process the effort to improve the staff development program probably won't succeed.

Here are some suggestions for setting up teams:

- The building principal should endorse and encourage the forming of the coaching teams and support groups.
- Coaching teams should form naturally from small groups of people who like and respect each other. (The principal may need to initiate some suggestions for membership to be sure all those who want to participate are included.)
- People who don't want to participate shouldn't be forced to participate although they should be encouraged to sit in on a team if the team is comfortable having them do so.
- Specific expectations about the number of observations and coaching follow-up sessions should be established at the beginning.
- Specific times should be set aside for the observation and follow-up sessions.

At a broader level, you may want to think about the implementation process by drawing a parallel to the steps suggested by figure 1; i.e., providing a theory orientation and demonstration of coaching with a practice and feedback stage. Thus, a sequence for implementing a coaching process would be to:

- Provide an orientation to the process and the theory by discussing the idea at a staff meeting; this article could be distributed as background reading.
- Demonstrate the process through role playing or by showing McREL's videotape on coaching.
- Give the staff an initial opportunity to practice coaching using a simple procedure such as McREL's process for measuring academic efficiency. Under such an arrangement the initial support group session would be used to introduce the process. Everyone would practice making observations and the follow-up support group sessions would focus on a discussion of the nature and value of what occurred.
- Modify the process for conducting peer observations to satisfy the unique nature of your school and staff; and
- Follow up with coaching sessions on the coaching process.

Another model for approaching the implementation process is provided by the "Concerns-Based Adoption Model" (CBAM), developed at the University of Texas. It provides an empirically valid model of how implementation works. Basically it suggests that while implementing a new behavior or set of skills people go through very predictable stages. At each stage implementors express different kinds of concerns and have different information needs. The seven stages of concerns are:

If you think about how teachers would approach the implementation of coaching to improve staff development, you can easily imagine how their concerns would follow in the order suggested by Figure 2. First they'd want to know what it was and what it's supposed to do. But, soon, they'd worry about whether they would be embarrassed by teaching in front of their peers, whether it was really a subterfuge for personnel evaluation, whether they could work well with members of their peer team, etc. During this period it would be very important for the principal to provide support and information that is directly related to these concerns and not push too rapidly into the observations.

Once teachers have moved beyond the personal level of concern they would want much more information about the innovation. Once teachers have tried the coaching innovation and are using it at the "mechanical level", they will want to know if it is producing the promised results.

The CBAM stages of concern are a great help to the person responsible for leading the implementation/change process. The model tells him or her how to assess process along. For example, by asking participants what their concerns are and by listening carefully a leader can usually identify the stage of concern. It is essential that the leader focus on that level of concern. If the leader ignores the messages and moves ahead, the implementation process may be disrupted.

Figure 2

STAGES OF CONCERN ABOUT THE INNOVATION*

0 **AWARENESS:** Little concern about or involvement with the innovation is indicated.

1 **INFORMATIONAL:** A general awareness of the innovation and interest in learning more detail about it is indicated. The person seems to be unworried about her/himself in relation to the innovation. S/he is interested in substantive aspects of the innovation in a selfless manner such as general characteristics, effects, and requirements for use.

2 **PERSONAL:** Individual is uncertain about the demands of the innovation, her/his inadequacy to meet those demands, and her/his role with the innovation. This includes analysis of her/his role in relation to the reward structure of the organization, decision making, and consideration of potential conflicts with existing structures or personal commitment. Financial or status implications of the program for self and colleagues may also be reflected.

3 **MANAGEMENT:** Attention is focused on the processes and tasks of using the innovation and the best use of information and resources. Issues related to efficiency, organizing, managing, scheduling, and time demands are utmost.

4 **CONSEQUENCE:** Attention focuses on impact of the innovation on students in her/his immediate sphere of influence. The focus is on relevance of the innovation for students, evaluation of student outcomes, including performance and competencies, and changes needed to increase student outcomes.

5 **COLLABORATION:** The focus is on coordination and cooperation with others regarding use of the innovation.

6 **REFOCUSING:** The focus is on exploration of more universal benefits from the innovation, including the possibility of major changes or replacement with a more powerful alternative. The individual has definite ideas about alternatives to the proposed or existing form of the innovation.

* Original concept from Hall, G.E., Wallace, R.C., Jr., & Dossett, W.A. "A development conceptualization of the adoption process within educational institutions." Austin: Research and Development Center for Teacher Education, The University of Texas, 1973.

The Role of the Principal

The principal is a key actor in creating the conditions and incentives that will support the development of a coaching system for staff development. For example, he or she must take responsibility for creating the conditions mentioned at the beginning of this article (the belief that everyone can improve, a high level of trust, and an interpersonal climate of caring and support).

In addition, s/he must work to actively create a sense of collegiality in the building. This term has been used by Judith Little to describe the characteristic she found in successful schools. By the term collegiality she means an environment in which the norm or expectation is that the staff will work cooperatively to exchange information and support one another to improve instruction. For example, informal conversations occur in the staff lounge or elsewhere that focus on school improvement. Staff meetings devote time to improvement rather than to housekeeping matters and "administrivia." Teachers visit each other's classroom and the principal spends a significant amount of his or her time interacting with teachers about instructional matters.

How does the principal do this? (See Figure 3 for a more complete statement of the steps listed below).

First, the principal must *announce* his or her expectation that collegiality and coaching is a part of the school's values. He or she must explain what is meant by the terms, examples of how they already exist and how everyone can contribute to building collegiality.

Second, the principal must model the processes; this might be done by inviting discussion of some of his/her own activities, encouraging suggestions for improvement and, perhaps, by inviting another principal to act as a coach to him or her.

Third, the principal must sanction or reward the desired behavior by giving teachers credit and recognition for their efforts and spreading news of what's happening.

Fourth, the principal must defend those who are taking the risks to spread the sought-after practices. He or she can provide the rhetoric that defends the approach, publicize it with the central office and secure its approval.

In addition, the principal is responsible for arranging for the logistics of coaching: setting aside the time for the support meetings, facilitating the time for the team observations and generally being available to troubleshoot the process and provide assistance when requested.

It will probably be best if the principal does not actively participate in the support group meeting or the team meetings unless his or her help is specifically requested. In the initiation of the process, particularly the demonstration stage, he or she might be more visible. It will be best, in the long run, if the principal works to create a self-sustaining coaching system among the teachers themselves. Whatever else, the principal must avoid making judgments about teacher performance as part of the coaching process.

FIGURE 3

MANAGEMENT TACTICS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

RANGE OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES	PRACTICE THAT *PERMIT* TEACHERS' NORMS OF COLLEGIALITY AND EXPERIMENTATION		PRACTICES THAT *STRENGTHEN* OR *STIMULATE* TEACHERS' NORMS OR COLLEGIALITY AND EXPERIMENTATION		
Announcing expectations	Describe, explain it to teachers who ask	Add it to a list of "things we've got going this year" during the first faculty meeting	Announce that some teachers have been exploring some well-tested ideas and will be trying them out with your (principal) encouragement	Announce that you and some teachers have formed a small team to test some worthy ideas, will keep everybody posted on the trials and tribulations, and that the effort can be expected to require a chunk of principal's time	Announce that a practice is sound enough that all are expected to use it
Modeling or enacting (plan for observations or assist with it)	Arrange time, materials, and assistance for teachers to plan Arrange for consultant observation/ conference with teachers	Review teacher's plans Join consultant in observation and conference	Plan with teachers a sequence of implementation Conduct regular meetings with teachers to hear how it's going	Plan with teachers for course units, lessons, and materials Conduct regular classroom observations of at least 50 minutes using clinical supervision cycle	Plan with teachers to refine, adapt, etc., in the face of difficulty Cover classes so teachers can observe one another
Sanctioning (rewarding it)	Provide teachers access to materials, assistance, time, university credit	Spread news of progress in informal contacts with other teachers, administrators, school board members, etc. (fame)	Offer an altered teacher/principal relationship stressing collaboration	Offer specific feedback on progress based on discussion and observation	Invite teachers to act as consultants outside the school
Defending or Protecting	Leave disinterested teachers a graceful way out in early stages	Read enough and talk enough to be able to lay out the rationale for the approach	Find ways to support other teachers who display initiative	Accumulate "practical" instances of how the approach looks in the classroom and what the effects are	Arrange for teachers' involvement to satisfy other district requirements

Escalating effects

Adapted from Judith Warren Little's *School Success and Staff Development*. Center for Action Research, 1981.

Escalating demands

RESEARCH BRIEF

COACHING TEACHERS

A school cannot be effective without quality teaching and productive teacher/student interactions. What can be done to make quality teaching a reality in every classroom? Looking at that question requires that we take into consideration two facts about teachers:

1. *Teacher isolation is the norm.* Teachers work without adult interaction most of the day. Their classroom is their turf, and the price of this autonomy is professional interaction, the sharing of ideas and experience, and the support of one's peers.

2. *Teachers need to be able to use innovations in a practical way.* Themes of instruction or models of pedagogical techniques that cannot be readily applied to the classroom now are of very limited use to teachers "under fire."

Coaching teachers, that is, working with them in the classroom, is one way to ensure that innovations or new skills are practiced. Coaching is a useful strategy for teacher improvement not only because it is practice-oriented, but also because it requires interaction with colleagues and helps build a sense of professional responsibility. Coaching allows teachers to keep the classroom operable while incorporating new ideas.

This short article will look briefly at some of the questions educators have about coaching: What does it involve? Does it work? Will it work for me?

Peer Coaching: Working Together in the Classroom

Coaching means that someone is in the classroom helping the teacher adapt a new strategy or improve an old one. Who that person is will vary and so will the specifics of his or her approach. But the purpose will be the same: to observe, describe and analyze the classroom performance of the teacher as a basis for working together to plan and test new strategies.

Coaching is an ambitious and demanding activity, not something to be approached casually. If it succeeds it's a mutual accomplishment that can be attributed to the discipline, commitment, and courage of *both* coach and teacher. Some of the requirements for successful coaching are outlined by Bird[1]:

If coaching is to occur, the coach must demonstrate sufficient knowledge and skill to help a practitioner of a complex craft. The teacher not only allows the observation to take place, but also participates in it by conducting lessons which reveal his or her present proficiency with some set of practices. Further, the teacher must listen to the coach's descriptions and participate actively in discussions with the coach.

If coaching is to be useful, the coach must be able to make a record of the lesson that reveals something to the teacher about his or her teaching practice. He can also offer an insightful analysis of the lesson and its consequences, or offer alternatives which will work better. The above must be done clearly and in a manner respectful of the teacher's competence and feelings.

If coaching is to make a difference to students, the teacher must be willing to try some improvement. Coaching's main purpose is to get at the performance of teaching. It is best if the changes are made in the presence of the coach who can then help with needed adjustments.

If coaching is to remain useful over a period of time, the coach's skills as observer and consultant must improve with the teacher's. Otherwise the coach's ability to lead and support will decline in proportion to the teacher's gains. Beware of implying that teaching should be improved, but coaching has been perfected!

Assuming that both coaches and teachers meet these stringent requirements and are willing to work together, what specific kinds of results can the teacher or administrator expect from this type of improvement activity?

Joyce and Showers describe four major functions of coaching that not only will help ensure better classroom performance by means of teachers using new skills and strategies but also will make this improvement process part of a new norm of collegial relations among teachers[2]:

1. **Provision of companionship.** The coaching relationship provides an opportunity for professional interaction with another educator. It results in the possibility of mutual reflection, the checking of perceptions, the sharing of frustrations and successes, and the informal thinking through of mutual problems.

2. **Provision of technical feedback.** Members of the coaching teams point out omissions, examine how materials are arranged, and check to see whether all parts of the teaching strategy have been brought together. The feedback helps keep the teacher's mind on the business of perfecting skills, polishing them, and working through problem areas. The act of providing feedback is also beneficial to the person doing it. It is often easier to see problems of confusion and omission when watching someone else teach than when attempting to recapture one's own process.

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3. **Analysis of application.** Selecting the right occasions to use a teaching strategy is not as easy as it sounds. Most of us need help to find out how much we have, in fact, accomplished and, of course, how much we might accomplish by making adjustments in the way we are using the strategy. Practice in the classroom allows close attention to be given to appropriate use.

4. **Adaptation to the students.** Successful teaching requires successful student response. A new strategy needs to be adapted to fit different groups of students. In the early stages, adaptation to the students is relatively difficult and usually requires a lot of direct assistance and companionship. One of the major functions of the coach is to help the "players" to "read" the responses of the students so that the right decisions are made about how to adapt the new strategy. This is especially important in the early stages of practice when one's hands are full managing one's own behavior.

Does Coaching Work?

Research on training has demonstrated that with thorough training, which includes theory, demonstration, and opportunities for practice and feedback, most teachers can acquire skills and strategies previously absent from their teaching repertoires. Two series of studies on coaching were carried out in order to better understand the problems of transfer of training and to increase the rates of transfer.[4]

Study 1: Coaching by Consultants. Following an initial training period of eight weeks during which the 17 teachers participating in the study were instructed in three new models of teaching language arts and social studies, the teachers were separated into two groups for a seven-week "treatment period" during which they were encouraged to use the new strategies and were observed in their classrooms regularly. One of the two groups was coached by a consultant who observed each teacher once a week, conferred with the teacher to provide feedback and assistance in planning future lessons, and occasionally helped locate or produce materials.

At the end of the treatment period, all teachers performed a transfer task in which they taught the same unit of material to one class of students. The transfer of training scores computed for all participants showed that the coached teachers scored significantly higher than the uncoached teachers.

The power of coaching in attacking transfer problems was apparent in the final results of the study: teachers who were not coached practiced the new strategies less and therefore developed less technical skill in the use of the models. Uncoached teachers who did practice occasionally but without the analysis and feedback provided by coaching did not, for the most part, develop greater skill in the strategies. Practice without feedback tends to make any learner more and more proficient in his or her mistakes.

A follow up to this study was conducted nine months after the close of the project to determine if skills and transfer of training were retained. When asked to demonstrate lessons using the strategies learned, the coached teachers maintained their advantage in both skill and transfer. Several of the uncoached teachers found they were unable to demonstrate the models at all following a lapse of practice with the strategies.

Study 2: Peer Coaching. A study of peer coaching was conducted to determine if peer coaches could be trained to provide consistent coaching to a new group of trainees and if a peer coaching treatment would replicate the effects of coaching found in the earlier study. The study also investigated the degree of teacher collegiality developed by a peer-coaching approach to training. Following the initial six-week training period, peer coaches observed each of their trainees once a week and met with them following the observation for coaching sessions.

At the end of the project, the mean transfer score for peer-coached teachers was again higher than that of uncoached teachers. Furthermore, coached teachers reported unanimously that the peer coaching had been a positive experience both professionally and interpersonally.

Showers concluded that the provision of coaching after the initial training is apparently essential for most teachers if new skills and strategies are to be appropriately implemented. She also notes that, "the design and implementation of powerful training systems is unlikely to occur without thoughtful and determined leadership at both the district and building levels."[5] Organization of peer-coaching systems will most likely need to be cooperatively arranged between district administrators and school sites. The building principal is in a unique position to facilitate the implementation of a peer-coaching system in his or her school.

The Role of the Principal

The building principal interested in establishing a peer-coaching system will have to carefully examine his priorities for staff development and how the funds for staff development are currently being allocated. According to Showers there are several actions that a building principal can take to support coaching:[6]

- *Scheduling.* In schools where teachers already have preparation periods scheduled into their work days, teachers can be organized into coaching teams for collaborative planning and feedback sessions. Some schools have used specialist teachers to release teachers for observation periods, and some principals have taken classes in order to provide observation times for teachers.
- *New Norms.* Teachers have so long worked in isolation that serious distortions have often developed about personal competence. Principals must work to establish new norms that reward collegial planning, public teaching, constructive feedback, and experimentation. Professional growth must be seen as a valuable and expected process and clearly separated from the evaluation of performance.

- *Outside Support.* Parents and community members' support can be solicited by explaining the purpose and expected outcomes of intensive staff development programs embedded in larger school improvement efforts. Principals must initiate these activities if they are to have any hope of affecting entire schools.
- *Inservice Programs.* Principals can use their influence to ensure that quality inservice programs are provided for teachers. Coaching programs must have some content to coach, and the greater the expertise brought to bear on identified problems, the greater the dividends from a coaching effort.

Coaching - A Feasible Strategy?

Does coaching work for everyone? What does it take to get it started? Based on their attempts to establish peer coaching at a middle school and a high school, Bird and Little describe the following steps that will need to be taken in establishing a peer coaching program:[7]

- *Focus.* Staff interactions need to be focused on teaching practices, not student problems, administrative concerns, or district policies. Teachers will want to know how the role of coach differs from that of evaluator. Many teachers are hesitant to observe or be observed; they see it as part of the evaluation process, which they find threatening.
- *Shared Language.* A common set of terms for instructional practices is helpful to have both in the training of the peer coaches and in the observation forms they use.
- *Participation.* Those teachers who are trained as teacher-coaches will be seen as leaders in the coaching activity. To strengthen the idea of coaching as a collegial activity, it is best to give some training to as many teachers as possible.
- *Position.* The school administrators will need to work out what their position will be in relation to the teacher-coaches — what kind of endorsement and support they will offer or what kind of instructional leadership they will provide. Some administrators participate and lead in coaching; some cover classes so teachers can coach each other; and some give verbal endorsement but do not actively participate.
- *Place and Time.* The school schedule is often a barrier to coaching. When do teachers get time to do classroom observation, much less meet for a pre-observation conference and a post-observation feedback session? Teachers who know each other may arrange to get together more or less informally, but the full opportunity for coaching is exploited only when the teachers examine their schedule as a whole. People who don't know each other very well are urged to coach each other.
- *Reciprocity.* Coaching assumes that teaching practices are open to scrutiny and evaluation. This can be a difficult thing for some teachers to accept. It helps to build trust in the process if the observer offers an objectified record of the lesson rather than off-the-cuff remarks. A detailed or near-verbatim record of what is said and done in the class gives the observer some right to speak about the lesson observed. It is also helpful if the observer makes certain that demands or suggestions are matched by support and help. Coaching is a learning situation for both the observer and the observed.
- *Deference.* It is important that while the teacher's practices and habits are put on the table and dissected, the person who uses them remains intact. There are several ways to minimize the potentially negative impact of the feedback session on the observed teacher: let the teacher who was observed start the discussion of the lesson; describe the observation in third-person terms; pick one thing to praise as worthy of continuing; pick just one part of the lesson which might be improved. The coach needs to agree not to say too much. Maintaining good will and good humor is essential to peer coaching.
- *Frequency.* Because of other demands on time, coaching needs to be perceived as important, useful, practical, and helpful by both teachers and administrators. It takes time to acquire a taste for coaching, and it takes persistence on the part of the teacher-coaches to make it a habit. The goal of frequent, constant, and pervasive talk about teaching needs to be re-emphasized by all participants.

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Synthesis of Research on Staff Development for Effective Teaching

GEORGEA MOHLMAN SPARKS

Staff development offers one of the most promising roads to the improvement of instruction.[1] It can be thought of as a "nested process" that includes *goals and content*, the *training process*, and the *context*. The diagram in Figure 1 reminds us that these factors are interrelated and that staff development takes place within an organizational context.

While the research on the content of staff development is examined first, the emphasis of this review is on the process—or delivery systems—of staff development and how they affect teacher change and improvement. The final sections focus on the process of teacher change and recommendations for staff development.

The Content of Staff Development Programs

What should be taught to teachers if the goal is instructional improvement? This is a critical question for those in charge of staff development. Fortunately, research has uncovered strong links between certain teacher actions and desirable student outcomes. Since this literature has been reviewed elsewhere (Brophy, 1983; Rosenshine, 1983), only a few of the major lines of research are mentioned here.

Studies of teacher effectiveness have identified specific classroom management practices, instructional techniques, and expectations that appear to help many students raise their reading and math test scores (Brophy, 1982). Teachers who manage their classes to

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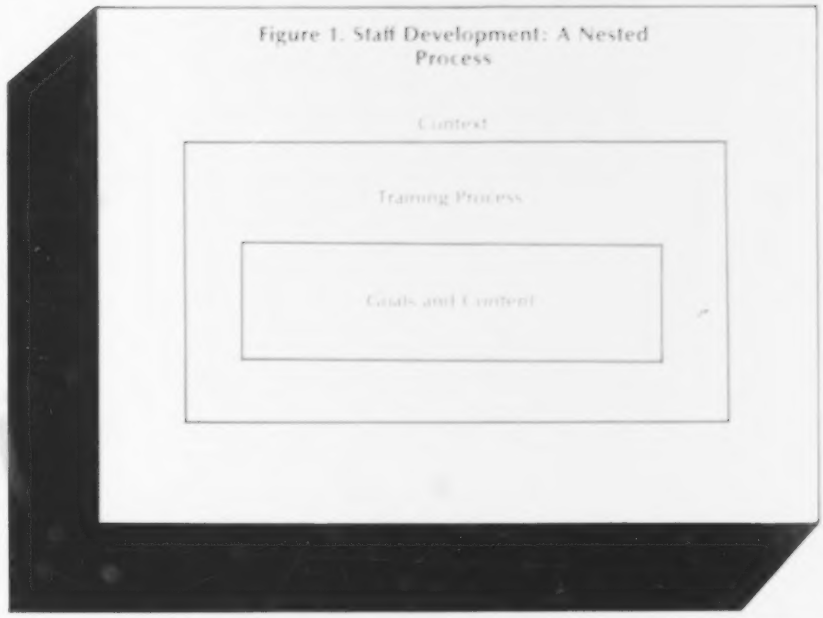
Figure 1. Staff Development: A Nested Process



"What should be taught to teachers if the goal is instructional improvement? This is a critical question for those in charge of staff development."

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maintain a smooth, business-like environment, who teach actively with full student participation, and who hold the expectation that students can and will learn tend to have students who achieve more in reading and math. Group or team learning approaches have also been found to enhance student learning (Slavin, 1980). And teachers' levels of interpersonal communication skills have been found to relate positively to student attitudes and learning (Aspy and Roebuck, 1982).

The Context of Staff Development Programs

The context or environment that ensures the success of staff development efforts has received considerable attention in the past ten years. The importance of the organizational context of staff development efforts was highlighted in the Rand study of educational innovations (Berman and McLaughlin, 1978). After examining the implementation of hundreds of federally funded programs, the researchers concluded that the major factor affecting success of the programs was administrative support—from both principals and superintendents.

Lieberman and Miller (1981) emphasized the importance of the principal as an instructional leader in bringing about improvements in teaching. Stallings and Mohlman (1981) found that teachers improved most in schools where the principal was supportive of teachers and clear and consistent in communicating school policies.

Little's (1981) study of the effects of staff development concentrated on the prevailing climate and types of interaction in the school context. She found that staff development efforts were most likely to be successful where a "norm of collegiality and experimentation" existed. Simply put, in schools where staff development had the greatest influence on teaching, teachers shared their ideas about instruction and tried out new techniques in their classrooms.

But how is a supportive school context created? Recently, various approaches to school-based staff development have been developed. Many of them share a common element: the major responsibility for planning and implementation is given to the local school staff. Outside assistance is provided only when needed. One such model, RPTIM (Wood, Thompson, and Russell, 1981) includes five steps: readiness, training, planning, implementation, and maintenance. Wood and his colleagues train school district personnel, who implement the process in local schools.

A similar model, implemented in over 50 schools in metropolitan Detroit, is called Staff Development for School Improvement (SDSI) (Hough and Urick, 1981; Litsworth and Bonner, 1983). The six steps are: (1) awareness, readiness, and commitment among staff; (2) needs assessment; (3) planning; (4) implementation; (5) evaluation; and (6) reassessment and continuation. School planning teams receive start-up money and the assistance of a university facilitator for three years. An evaluation of 19 schools conducted after the second year of the project (Sparks, 1983c) indicated that 82 percent or more of the participants noted improvements in teachers' knowledge, skills, and communication. The most commonly mentioned strengths of the program were the opportunity to have responsibility for staff development and the improved school climate. Clearly, these collaborative staff development models show promise for creating a positive context for inservice activities.

The Processes of Staff Development

What kinds of training processes help teachers grow in their skills? What should be the schedule of training? How large should workshop groups be? Which learning activities enable teachers to use new techniques in their classes? What, if anything, should participants do between workshops? Fortunately, recent research offers answers to these questions.

Scheduling of Staff Development Activities. Most research on instructional improvement has indicated that inservice programs consisting of a single session are largely ineffective (Lawrence, 1974). Most staff development programs that have an impact on teaching behavior are spaced over time (Berman and McLaughlin, 1978). There seem to be at least two explanations for this.

The Rand researchers (Berman and McLaughlin, 1976) introduced the concept of "mutual adaptation." As teachers tried out new practices, they adapted and modified them to fit their unique situations. Both the new techniques and the setting into which they were brought were gradually changed. Thus, researchers found that where such mutual adaptation occurred over time, the likelihood of successful implementation was greater.

> ***"Teachers' levels of interpersonal communication relate positively to student attitudes and learning."***

Another rationale for the effectiveness of long-term change efforts is provided by the Concerns-Based Adoption Model (CBAM) (Hall and Loucks, 1978). CBAM takes into consideration teachers' concerns at various stages in the change process and designs training activities that address those concerns. For example, teachers' early concerns about how the program will affect them personally may later develop into concerns about how the program will affect students. An effective long-term staff development effort will most likely deal with such changing concerns in an adaptive, sensitive manner.

One staff development schedule that seems to be effective is a series of four to six three-hour workshops spaced one or two weeks apart. This schedule, used in a study of teacher effectiveness (Stallings, Needels, and Stayrook, 1979), resulted in teachers improving their behavior on 25 out of 31 classroom management and instructional practices. Other teaching effectiveness experiments (e.g., Anderson, Evertson, and Brophy, 1979) have also demonstrated impressive teacher changes resulting from two or more training sessions separated by at least one week.

The implication here is that teachers need to be given the content of inservice education in small "chunks" spaced over time so that changing concerns can be addressed and only a few changes at a time are being attempted. The "one-shot" presentation (even if the "shot" lasts two or three days) does not allow for the gradual change inherent in the concerns-based approach and in the notion of mutual adaptation. Further, in such

settings, there is no opportunity for ongoing discussion of problems and concerns related to implementation, which is critical.

Types of Training Activities. The staff development model proposed by Stallings (1982) is based on the notion of mastery learning, which includes the following steps: pretest (diagnosis), inform and discuss, guided practice and feedback, and post-test. The work of Joyce and Showers (1980, 1981, 1982) has brought to light the importance of carefully selecting the training activities used during staff development programs. Initially they suggested that four training components—presentation of material, demonstration of skills, practice, and feedback—were necessary for most teachers to acquire facility in a new model of teaching. Most recently, the authors have added that without the addition of a fifth component—coaching—transfer of the new skills to everyday practice cannot be guaranteed. Coaching in the correct use of the new skill could be provided by another teacher, an administrator, or a trainer.

By combining the activities suggested by Joyce and Showers (1981) and Stallings (1982), the following list of potential staff development activities results: diagnosing and prescribing, giving information and demonstrating, discussing application, practicing and giving feedback, and coaching (see Figure 2). The research on the effectiveness of each of these activities is examined in the following sections.

Figure 2. Types of Training Activities

- Diagnosing and Prescribing
- Giving Information and Demonstrating
- Discussing Application
- Coaching

- Diagnosing and Prescribing. The Stallings Effective Use of Time Program (Stallings and others, 1978) is one of the few staff development models that includes this activity. Teachers receive detailed profiles based on three one-hour classroom observations of their teaching behavior. The profiles include recommendations for behavior change based on previous correlational and experimental studies of teacher effects. Teachers are encouraged to select only a few areas for change. After training, they receive further observations and a final profile. Teacher improvement has been impressive with this training format.

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Many teachers who have participated in the Stallings program have mentioned that their awareness of how they used class time was raised by the teaching behavior profiles. The research on behavior change in counseling situations has long stressed the importance of building an awareness for the need to change before attempting change (Stanford, 1967). Diagnosis and awareness-raising are two aspects of staff development programs that merit further attention.

- Giving Information and Demonstrating. Due to the "front-end" nature of most staff development in-service programs. While we know that "telling is not teaching," it is important that the "telling" part of staff development be done well. Joyce and Showers (1981) stress the importance of providing clear demonstrations of recommended practices and argue that little change is likely to occur without them. The term "demonstration" has a broad meaning that includes live modeling, videotapes, detailed narrative descriptions, and even credit-developed and labeled examples. In short, when trying to learn a new skill or concept, it helps to see it or visualize it in practice.

It appears that providing information and demonstrations can be a quite powerful training activity when used alone without other activities. One teacher effectiveness study (Crawford and others, 1978) found that teachers whose only training experience was reading a training manual that contained detailed explanations and specific narratives of classroom episodes used the recommended teaching practices significantly more than did a control group of teachers. The use of one or two workshops, along with manuals that provide vivid verbal illustrations of recommended teaching practices, has been effective in producing teacher change in other teacher training studies (Good and Grouws, 1979; Anderson and others, 1978). In summary, clear, detailed presentations of information with modeling or demonstrations seem to be necessary, but not necessarily sufficient, for the success of staff development efforts.

- Discussing Application. Although neither Joyce and Showers (1981) nor Stallings (1982) lists this as a separate activity, it is included separately because it seems to be a crucially important aspect of staff development and teacher growth. When teachers are asked what they like best about in-service workshops, they often mention the sharing of ideas with other teachers (Holly, 1982).

Discussion can be useful when new concepts or techniques are presented. For example, when presenting the research findings on Task 1 in the California Department of Education Effective Classroom Learning Model (Marliave, Kierstead, and Canallach, 1982), teachers were asked to brainstorm the techniques they used to increase the amount of academic time and decrease the amount of "down" or nonacademic time.

In the Effective Use of Time workshops (Stallings and others, 1978), teachers are encouraged to experiment with one or two new techniques at a time (for example, using grouping or designing an incentive system). At the

end of each session they write down the new ideas they will try. The first activity at the next workshop (one or two weeks later) is a discussion of what each person tried and how it worked.

Many programs that have been effective in helping teachers adopt new practices include time for discussion (Evertson and others, 1982). Teachers are encouraged to talk about how the new techniques are working for them, their problems and successes, and their concerns. The discussion is most productive when guided by a facilitator or workshop leader who keeps the group focused on finding solutions and sharing ideas rather than allowing the group to get sidetracked into talk about school policies or individual students. The leader also contributes effective techniques not mentioned by other teachers.

Including opportunities for discussion and reflection in small "support groups" appears to be a productive training activity. The idea of creating instructional support groups is not new. Bentzen's (1974) ESEA study of school change highlighted the "peer group strategy" as a powerful force for change. When staff members formed small groups and engaged in group problem-solving activities, changes occurred and persisted in the school.

It is important that the discussion activity occur in a relatively small group of eight or fewer teachers. Participation tends to be more equal in small groups; shy people are more likely to "speak up" and those who tend to dominate are more considerate of other group members' desire to contribute their ideas (Menlo and Gill, 1982). Also, it can take several minutes for participants to explain how a particular lesson or game works in enough detail to allow the other teachers to try out the new idea on their own. Additionally, with smaller groups, each member has sufficient time to contribute and explain his or her favorite technique.

Finally, there is a special kind of camaraderie that develops among a small group of teachers who meet regularly to improve their professional skills. In the Stallings' Effective Use of Time Program, six or seven teachers meet five times every one or two weeks. To understand the process of teacher growth, 17 teachers who had just completed the training were interviewed (Sparks, 1983b). Ninety percent of the teachers interviewed mentioned how much they appreciated the "personal nature" of the workshops, most of them said that their previous inservice programs had been in large groups where an "expert" talked down to them. The five teachers who made the greatest improvements in observed teaching behavior said that hearing about their colleagues' instructional problems and solutions made them feel less isolated and more confident about their ability to make changes in their classrooms.

The cost of conducting workshops with small groups is lowered when teachers become trainers of other teachers. Stallings and others (1978) found that "Effective Use of Time" workshops had the same effects on teaching behavior and student learning when teacher trainers led the workshops as when Stallings' trainers conducted them.

If logistics make it necessary to conduct this inservice sessions with larger numbers of teachers, small group activities can still be included. Large groups could gather for presentations and demonstrations; small subgroups could be formed for discussions. If no facilitators are available to guide the discussions, specific tasks can be assigned to the groups along with guidelines for equal participation. In any case, there is growing evidence that small group discussion of the applications of and concerns about new techniques enhances the eventual adoption of new teaching practices.

- **Practicing and Having Feedback.** Having opportunities to practice a new skill and receive feedback on performance is helpful for behavior change. Indeed, Bloghy and Good (1974) found that just providing feedback to teachers about their differential treatment of students resulted in significant changes in teacher-student interaction. There are several ways of providing practice and feedback in staff development programs.

The simplest form of practice occurs in the classroom, where the teacher tries out a new practice and receives feedback by observing the effect on students.

of the new technique. The desirable results are often immediately apparent.

For some teachers, for instance, the "omnivores" referred to by Joyce and McKibbin, 1982) and some practices (certain simple classroom management techniques or question-asking strategies), this laissez-faire form of practice and feedback may be adequate. However, for most teachers and most skills being taught in staff development workshops, purposeful, structured practice and feedback activities seem to work best (Joyce and Showers, 1980).

Microteaching, role-playing, and peer observation are common practice and feedback activities. In-classroom coaching (which is discussed separately) is another approach to providing feedback. It differs from simple feedback in that the "coach" critiques behavior, makes suggestions for improvement, and, perhaps, even demonstrates the desirable behavior.

Microteaching has been a successful format for providing practice and feedback. The teacher prepares a 5- to 20-minute lesson that is taught to a group of five to ten students. Usually the lesson is audio- or videotaped to provide immediate feedback on the new skills being practiced in the lesson. Studies of inservice training that include microteaching activities indicate that this activity enables teachers to make specific changes in their teaching behavior (Borg, 1977).

Role-playing during the workshop is another valuable practice activity. The trainer monitors and provides feedback to the participants as they practice the new skill (such as using eye-contact to quell misbehavior) with their peers.

Peer observation is also a powerful mechanism for promoting constructive interaction among teachers. In an often-cited study by Roper, Deal, and Dornbusch (1976), elementary school teachers who visited each other's classrooms for the purpose of peer evaluation improved their teaching significantly. Berman and McLaughlin (1976) listed peer observation as one of the activities included in the effective change programs they reviewed.

Recently, Sparks (1983b) examined the effects of three combinations of training activities on classroom teaching behavior. Three groups of six junior high school teachers participated in five Effective Use-of-Time workshops. Teachers in one group conducted two peer observations between workshops, teachers in the second group were "coached" individually by the trainer, and teachers in the third group received only the workshops with no extra feedback or coaching. The teachers in the workshops-plus-peer-observations group improved more than did the teachers in the workshops-only group. It also appeared that peer observation may have been more powerful than coaching in producing improvements in teaching behavior.

There are several reasons that may explain the effectiveness of peer observation activities. First, the peer observers were involved in the analysis and coding of teacher and student behavior. This experience may have made them more aware of their own behavior and thus more able to analyze and make changes in their own teaching. Second, just observing another teacher can be a powerful learning experience. After observing a colleague, teachers often say how helpful it is to see another classroom; they often then are able to share the good ideas and new techniques they saw in action. Sadly, it is rare for teachers to see their peers teaching (Yarger, Howey, and Joyce, 1980).

Finally, peer observation may help break down the "psychological walls" between classrooms, thus dissipating the loneliness of teachers vividly described by Lortie (1975). The peer-observation group in the Sparks (1983b) study was exceptionally enthusiastic and cohesive. Being observed may have seemed slightly threatening at first, but once teachers realized their peers would not judge them, a team spirit began to develop.

I would like to add here a few cautions about peer observation. First, it should not be seen as a process where one teacher judges another; one teacher merely collects information for another teacher. Although Roper and others (1976) found desirable results with peer evaluation in the mid-70s, jobs are much more tenuous and competition is greater in the 80s. To create high levels of trust and collaboration, peer observation activities should be kept voluntary and completely separate from evaluation.

Another key factor in these projects is to make the observation student-focused rather than teacher-focused. For example, simple seating charts can be used to mark the target behavior (off-task activity or interactions with the teacher) of each student's "seat." For more detail, see Stallings, 1982). These data provide ample opportunity for discussing the effects of various teaching practices on student behavior. In the beginning, at least, this helps the observed teacher feel less "on the spot" and self-conscious. After higher trust is developed, teaching behavior may become the predominant focus of the observation.

The purpose of the peer observation process is not just to provide feedback. Its most important function is to stimulate analysis and discussion of the effects of teaching behavior on students. This process occurs as the pair of teachers examine the completed observation forms under the guidance of the workshop leader or in post-observation discussions. As teachers practice new techniques in their classrooms, they receive objective feedback from the observation forms. They then bring this information to the workshop to discuss in light of what they have been learning about effective teaching practices.

In summary, peer observation—"equals" observing each other—seems to be a promising activity for staff development. To be most effective, however, it should occur in an atmosphere of trust and collaboration.

● Coaching. The final training activity examined here is coaching, defined by Joyce and Showers (1981) as "hands-on, in-classroom assistance with the transfer of skills and strategies to the classroom" (p. 380). In a more recent description of coaching, Joyce and Showers (1982) described the process of coaching as the provision of companionship, giving of technical feedback, analysis of when to apply a model and the effects of its application, adaptation of the model to the needs of students, and interpersonal facilitation (support) during the practice period. Such coaching could be provided by administrators, curriculum supervisors, college professors, or teachers.

Joyce and Showers (1982) suggested that peer coaching is especially helpful for the transfer of learned skills to the classroom. Showers (1983) tested the effectiveness of peer coaching in an experimental study. Seventeen teachers were trained during seven weeks (21 hours) in three models of teaching (Joyce and Weil, 1974). After training, one teachers participated in an extended observation-feedback cycle ("peer coaching"), while the remaining teachers taught as usual. The teachers in the coaching group received on the average higher transfer-of-training scores than did the teachers not receiving the coaching. Thus, in this study, the provision of peer coaching appeared to assist in the implementation of the recommended models of teaching.

The efficacy of coaching provided by

an expert (rather than a peer) has received little investigation (Joyce and Showers, 1981). The study by Sparks (1983b) contrasted (1) workshops plus trainer-provided coaching with (2) workshops plus peer-observation with (3) workshops alone. The teachers in the peer-observation group improved more than the teachers in either of the other two groups. In this study at least, workshops plus trainer-provided coaching did not appear to be superior to workshops alone or to workshops plus peer observation. This is good news. Follow-up visits by an expert are expensive, and may be unnecessary for teachers to make real changes in their teaching.

Selecting Training Activities. Which training activities should be included in staff development programs? Are some more critical than others? Do characteristics of the training content influence the selection of training activities?

Joyce and Showers (1980) attempted to answer these questions in their review of training studies. They made an important distinction between two types of training content—the fine-tuning of existing skills and the learning of a new repertoire of unfamiliar skills or strategies. Briefly, they concluded that, for fine-tuning of skills, presentation and modeling were adequate for some teachers to use the skills routinely in class. As the recommended methods become less familiar and more complex, however, consistent practice with feedback was necessary for the majority of teachers. And some teachers needed direct coaching before transfer of such skills was attained.

An analysis of the training activities used in 20 studies of the implementation of inservice training (Sparks, 1983b) provided some support for these conclusions. In six of the studies of successful inservice training programs, only the presentation and modeling activities were used. The content of these six programs was derived from observational studies of everyday teaching behavior. Thus, the recommended practices were familiar to many teachers—clearly not "new repertoire." The two studies including coaching activities were providing training in Joyce and Weil's (1974) "models of teaching." These models—not derived from observational research on teacher effectiveness—were less familiar ("new repertoire") for the teachers.

Based on these analyses, familiarity with the recommended teaching practices (how foreign they are to the teachers' existing repertoire) may be an important factor influencing the choice of training activities. Teachers who are less familiar with the methods learned in workshops will tend to need additional training activities after presentation and demonstration.

Teacher Characteristics and Attitudes Toward Change

Although content, context, and process are important to consider when designing staff development programs, we have not yet touched on a fourth element that can influence the effectiveness of inservice education—the teachers themselves. Just as some methods work best with some students and not others, staff development programs may need to be adapted to fit various teacher characteristics and attitudes.

Teacher Characteristics. Intellectual traits and developmental maturity are two teacher characteristics that have been found to relate to teacher behavior change. In a teacher effectiveness experiment by Crawford and others (1978), the measure of teachers' verbal ability correlated significantly and positively with teachers' observed use of the recommended practices. In Showers' study of coaching (1985), teachers' conceptual levels (CL) were investigated. CL refers to modes of thinking and is theorized to range from concrete, rigid thought and behavior to abstract, more flexible thought and behavior (Hunt, 1975). Showers (1985) found that CL was positively related to transfer of training among the coached teachers: more flexible thinkers were more capable of using the recommended models of teaching as intended. No relation was found among the uncoached teachers, however. Finally, in a study by McKibbin and Joyce (1980), a psychological profile of teachers' "states" along Maslow's hierarchy of needs that is, safety to self-actualization needs—were positively related to teachers' self-reports of transfer of training to their classrooms.

In an excellent review of the literature on adult development, Oja (1980) made a strong case that staff development should strive to help teachers develop maturity on both the personal level (for instance, on Maslow's hierarchy) and the cognitive level (for instance, reasoning and CL). She suggested that staff development will have little impact on teaching styles without explicitly addressing personal and cognitive developmental levels of teachers. With the accumulating evidence that such teacher characteristics may influence teachers' ability to profit from inservice training, more attention may be needed in this area.

Teacher Attitudes. Teachers have many attitudes toward their staff development experiences. They may like or dislike the timing of the workshops, the trainer, or other organizational aspects of the training. The attitudes discussed here are the teachers' perceptions of the recommended changes in teaching behavior. Teachers make a conscious decision whether they will or will not try out or adopt a new practice. What influences this decision?

Doyle and Ponder (1977) have suggested that three criteria influence teachers' decisions regarding implementation of recommended practices. The first, instrumentality, refers to the extent to which a recommendation is stated clearly and specifically. The second criterion is congruence—how well the new practice fits in with the teacher's philosophy of teaching. The third is cost; teachers appear to weigh the effort required against the payoff of the new technique.

Mohlman, Gutshaw, and Fogg (1982) examined the findings from five teacher effectiveness experiments in the light of these three criteria and found that the more highly implemented practices tended to be perceived as specific, philosophically acceptable, and/or worth the effort. Many of the practices that were not adopted were seen as vague, as philosophically unacceptable, or as too much work.

These authors also investigated the relationship between teacher attitude toward the recommendations and implementation in one of the experiments. Teachers who expressed disagreement with the recommendations for (for instance, "I don't believe in having high school students read aloud" or "I have had many problems or difficulties with them" or "Grouping is too much work. I already do enough planning") tended not to implement the suggested practices.

Sparks (1983b) measured teachers' perceptions of the importance and difficulty of each of the practices recommended in Stallings' Effective Use of Time workshops. The teachers' ratings of the importance of using the techniques correlated positively and significantly with their implementation of them and with the degree of improvement. Ratings of the difficulty of the practices, however, did not predict the degree of use or improvement. Some teachers who improved dramatically felt

the changes had been easy to make; other improving teachers felt they had been difficult. The perception of difficulty seemed to be an individual matter.

Based on this work, it appears that, for teachers to use recommended practices in their classrooms, the techniques need to be made clear and explicit and teachers need to become convinced (a) that the practice is worthwhile (in terms of teacher or student outcomes) and (b) that the change can be made without too much work or disruption.

The Process of Teacher Change. Both Sparks (1983b) and Showers (1983) interviewed the teachers they trained to gain a deeper understanding of how changes in teaching occur. This research has provided new insights into the process of teacher change.

Sparks (1983b) examined interviews, questionnaires, observation data, and field notes for five teachers who made exceptional improvements (on classroom management and active instruction) and five teachers who made no improvements.

One interesting difference between the groups was in their level of self-expectations. The improvers said things like, "I now realize I have control over many things I thought I had no control over," and "I no longer feel powerless." The training helped these teachers develop a new confidence in their competency. The nonimprovers, in contrast, seemed to have lost hope that any changes could be made. They felt that trying anything new would make no difference. It was a sad case of low expectations for both the teacher and students (see Good, 1981, for a review of teacher expectations research).

Showers (1983) used teacher interviews, observations of, and conversations with the teachers in her Models-of-Teaching training to investigate the difficulties teachers had in transferring their new repertoire of rather complex skills to the classroom.

The most interesting problem the teachers had with the models was in knowing when to use them. Teachers either could not form objectives that fit the models, could not think of their curriculum in terms of the models and the concepts they developed, or used the models inappropriately. It was as if correct use of the models required some teachers to think about their objectives and curriculum in an entirely new way. That, for some teachers, was a cognitive task that proved too complex.

Although many of the barriers to change can be explained by Doyle and Ponder's (1977) notions of instrumentality, congruence, and cost, two other aspects of teacher change have been highlighted by these studies: self-efficacy and cognitive complexity. First, it appears that it may be desirable to help teachers acquire a heightened sense of self-efficacy—a confidence and belief in one's ability to deal effectively with classroom problems. Perhaps this is best done by starting with changes in teaching that are not too difficult, but that ensure success and positive feedback. It appears that, for some of the teachers in the Showers (1985) study, using some of the models correctly required too many complex skills that the teachers did not have. Thus, they could not experience success with the models.

The second piece of the puzzle of teacher change involves the restructuring of teachers' conceptualization of subject matter. That is, if a teacher sees biology as a series of lists to be learned and activities to be performed, it is unlikely that much concept development is going to occur. This teacher will need to be led through a reexamination and restructuring of the topics and concepts of biology. This point takes on more importance when we recognize

Highlights From Research on Staff Development for Effective Teaching

Studies comparing various models or processes of staff development are rare. While it is not possible to state conclusively that one inservice design is superior to another, we can put together the many pieces of research reviewed here to make some general recommendations about staff development programs for more effective teaching.

1. Select content that has been verified by research to improve student achievement.
2. Create a context of acceptance by involving teachers in decision making and providing both logistical and psychological administrative support.
3. Conduct training sessions (more than one) two or three weeks apart.
4. Include presentation, demonstration, practice, and feedback as workshop activities.
5. During training sessions, provide opportunities for small-group discussions of the application of new practices and sharing of ideas and concerns about effective instruction.
6. Between workshops, encourage teachers to visit each others' classrooms, preferably with a simple, objective, student-centered observation instrument. Provide opportunities for discussions of the observation.
7. Develop in teachers a philosophical acceptance of the new practices by presenting research and a rationale for the effectiveness of the techniques. Allow teachers to express doubts about or objections to the recommended methods in the small group. Let the other teachers convince the resisting teacher of the usefulness of the practices through "testimonies" of their use and effectiveness.
8. Lower teachers' perception of the cost of adopting a new practice through detailed discussions of the "nuts and bolts" of using the technique and teacher sharing of experiences with the technique.
9. Help teachers grow in their self-confidence and competence through encouraging them to try only one or two new practices after each workshop. Diagnosis of teacher strengths and weaknesses can help the trainer suggest changes that are likely to be successful—and, thus, reinforce future efforts to change.
10. For teaching practices that require very complex thinking skills, plan to take more time, provide more practice, and consider activities that develop conceptual flexibility.

the current need for more and better teachers of the higher-level thinking skills involved in math and science. It may be, as Oja (1980) has suggested, that we need to teach teachers how to think about their subjects with greater cognitive complexity. □

[1]Although some authors make a distinction between staff development and inservice education, I have used the two terms interchangably to mean *any training activity that attempts to help teachers improve teaching skills.*

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